Imagination: a tool for change

Marilyn Landreth, M.A.

ow many times have you intellectually known that you needed to improve your health by making a lifestyle change but just couldn't quite make the change? Next time you might want to enlist the aid of your imagination.

"Through imagination, we can visualize the uncreated worlds of potential that lie within us."

For many of us the main way we use our imagination is through worry. Martin Rossman, M. D., says "Uncontrolled imagination gives humans the unique ability to compress a lifetime of stress into every passing moment. Worry is a good example of the psychophysiological power of imagery. When you focus on danger and disaster, it can invoke the 'fight or flight' syndrome." Your body is physiologically alert for you to get ready to fight, run, or hide. That constant state of arousal can play a part in many chronic diseases.

Back in 1985, in *The Journal of the American Medical Association*, William H. Foege, M. D., said that two thirds of deaths are "premature given our present medical knowledge" and that about "two thirds of the years of life lost before age 65 are theoretically preventable given our current capabilities." There would be a tremendous savings in lives and resources by changing behavior or lifestyle. Foege also pointed out that, "In the coming decades, the most important determinants of health and longevity will be the personal choices made by each individual."

In a 1993 article in *The Journal of the American Medical Association*, McGinnis and Foegereported on a study in which approximately half of the deaths in 1990 were attributed to nongenetic factors, with the top three contributors to death being tobacco, diet and activity patterns, and alcohol.

Imagery can help you make the lifestyle changes that you intellectually know are important to your overall health. According to Dr. Rossman, "Imagery can be used to achieve deep physiologic relaxation, stimulate healing responses in your body, and create an inner dialog that can help you better understand your health and what you can do to improve it."

There are thousands of scientific studies exploring the connection between the body and mind. We know imagination does influence how we act or react to life and the choices we make in our lifestyle. We all use our imagination in one way or another and, since self awareness is one of the strengths of human beings, learning how we use our imagination is the first step. When we become aware of what drives us to make the choices we do, then we have the ability to make better choices.

Imagination uses all of the senses: vision, hearing, smell, feel, and taste. Through the use of my imagination, I code and store information and get in touch with memories. By using my imagination I can visit my childhood home, smell the bread baking in the kerosene oven in the kitchen, and feel the cool waters in the creek that meandered by my childhood home. In my imagination I can explore possibilities

continued on page 2

trans fatty acid's effect on health

trans Fatty acids have come under increasing criticism from health researchers around the world. The latest comes from Alberto Ascherio and Walter Willett with the Harvard School of Public Health.

"trans Fatty acids are formed during the process of partial hydrogenation in which liquid vegetable oils are converted to margarine or vegetable shortening," said the researchers recently in The American Journal of Clinical Nutrition.

Earlier research by Zock and Katan compared the effects of margarine and butter on blood cholesterol. *trans* Fat content of the margarines was strongly associated with total cholesterol-to-HDL. The higher the *trans* fat content the higher the total cholesterol.

"Although the U.S. food industry has resisted change, the major European margarine and oil manufacturers have acknowledged the adverse effects of *trans* fat and have eliminated or greatly reduced amounts in margarines," Ascherio claims.

Inside this issue...

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The information in this publication is meant to complement the advice and guidance of your physician, not replace it:

Nutritional Medicine

by Ron Hunninghake, M.D.

Healing imagery

A. If you are beginning to read this short piece standing up, please be seated. If you feel rushed right now, postpone finishing this until you have some relaxed quiet time.

B. OK, assuming you are ready to relax...close your eyes for a few seconds. Take a deep breath and again close your eyes for 10-15 seconds.

C. Now, again close your eyes, but this time, imagine the place you fondly recall as "home." Remember its smells. Remember it on a bright and sunny, warm day, with a soft breeze blowing and the trees and grass waving to your senses.

D. Recall a time you had been away from home and were just returning for a special visit. Close your eyes and be with the people, images, and feelings associated with such a homecoming.

E. Now, add another element. Imagine a very special person you associate with "home." It could be your mother or father, a grandparent, a brother or

sister, an aunt or uncle, or even a teacher or minister...someone very dear to your heart...someone that you deeply associate with "being home."

F. Imagine that person looking at you with smiling eyes. These are eyes that say "I really care for you, as you are." These are eyes that recognize your uniqueness. They know of your pains and hurts, successes and failures, your dreams and disappointments.

G. Knowing you this well, these special eyes penetrate your outer mask ...they see into your heart...they see into your soul. They recognize beauty and your infinite worth. These eyes shine with a deep love, a spiritual love for you.

H. Now close your eyes and enjoy this special inner state. Open your eyes and reflect on how you feel. These were not mere words. These words evoked special images, and these images evoked a special state unique unto you. While unique to everyone, its effect is common to all: Love and Healing!

Continued from page 1

and dreams. Imagery allows me to communicate with my silent mind in its native language.

Imagination also plays a part in the stresses of daily life. The results of recent research conducted to study the effect of mental stress on heart problems was reported at an October 1997 meeting of the American Medical Association by James Blumenthal, Ph.D. Dr. Blumenthal and his colleagues found that patients who learned to control their mental stress reduced their risk of having another heart attack by 74% when compared to patients only taking medication. The stress reduction subjects met once a week for an hour and a half in a combination group therapy and stress management meeting. Among other things, they learned to redirect defeatist thoughts. Blumenthal stated that he hoped this study would increase physicians' awareness of the

importance of stress management.

This has already happened in California where the Academy of Guided Imagery has recently developed a stress reduction program based on imagery that will be covered by Blue Cross and Blue Shield insurance.

In order to make changes, you first have to know that you can. In his book, *The Seven Habits of Highly Effective People*, Stephen Covey says the first habit is to know that you are the creator of your life. By using your imagination, conscience, independent will, and self-awareness, you are empowered to make changes; to understand that you do not have to continue with an "ineffective script." "Through imagination, we can visualize the uncreated worlds of potential that lie within us."

For older people, what you eat affects how you think

Is it true, what we eat affects how we think? And is this only true for older people?

The most recent research on this subject, reported in *The American Journal of Clinical Nutrition*, looked at 260 persons ranging in age from 65 to 90 who lived in Madrid, Spain. Rosa Ortega and her colleagues used two standardized tests to check their subject's cognitive functioning, or how well their thought processes work. They also closely monitored their food intake for seven days.

"In conclusion, the results appear to suggest that a lower intake of fat, saturated fat, and cholesterol, and a higher intake of carbohydrates, fiber, vitamins (especially folate, vitamins C and E, and beta-carotenes), and minerals (iron and zinc) might improve not only the nutritive status and general health of the elderly but also their cognitive ability," concluded the researchers

This could have an effect on younger people as well.

Ginkgo biloba effectiveness tested for dementia

"EGb [a particular extract of Ginkgo Biloba used in Europe] was safe and appears capable of stabilizing and, in a substantial number of cases, improving the cognitive performance and the social function of demented patients," wrote Pierre Le Bars, M.D., in the October 22 issue of *The Journal of the American Medical Association*.

The study followed 309 patients who were 45 or older for six months to one year. The researchers found ginkgo very safe. There were no significant side-effects in those taking Ginkgo biloba versus the placebo group.

One other thing the researchers noted was that even the care givers for the patients noticed an improvement in their abilities, Le Bars added.

HEALTH HUNTERS AT HOME

Water, weight loss, and other problems

I have a confession to make. I had let my water consumption drop to a level far below what it should be. I always meant to bring that quart water bottle to work and leave it on my desk to fill and empty at least twice a day. But in the rush of the morning, I would forget.

Now, I finally remember to bring it. Why now? The Center's health incentive for the month has the staff drinking at least two quarts of water a day.

One interesting thing that had happened as I let my water consumption drop was that my weight increased about twelve pounds. The connection between water and weight had slipped out of my consciousness until Marsha McCray, a nurse at The Center, gave me an article about weight loss and water consumption.

This article keyed in on the need to drink water as a way to lose weight. The author believes that when weight loss is the goal, you have to drink 10 to 12 eight oz. glasses of water a day. That is 2 1/2 to 3 quarts each day. And then he suggests, for every 25 pounds you need to lose, drink another glass of water every day.

He doesn't mean having three or four cups of coffee in the morning to get the day started, then a soft drink mid morning and another with lunch, followed by a couple of cups of coffee in the afternoon to keep you sharp, then a couple of glasses of wine with the evening meal and another cup of coffee after the meal. That is almost two quarts. But it is not what he had in mind.

He means water—clear, pure water. The purer the better. That seems like a lot of water to a non-drinker of water. To a water drinker, it seems about right. Here is what happens to the body with reduced consumption of water.

When I stopped drinking lots of water, my body assumed that I was in a drought and it had to conserve every drop of water that came in. It began storing in every space it could find, and quite a bit was stored around my middle. My pants became a little snug. Well,

actually, quite snug.

Now, here is the interesting paradox about water. As long as you drink little water, your body holds onto everything it can get and the drought mentality continues. Water weight continues to hang on and even increase.

To lose this water weight, you have to break the drought. You have to drink water. The interesting part of this to me was that I lost an inch around my waist in the first few days of drinking plenty of water again. I broke my drought.

There are a lot of other reasons to drink water besides weight loss. Here are a few of the many reasons F. Batmanghelidj, M.D., discusses in his book, Your Body's Many Cries for Water:

- You lose your thirst sensitivity when you become dehydrated. It is part of the "drought defense" of the body. I had lost mine.
- Dyspeptic pain (gastritis, duodenitis, and heartburn) are often the body's cry for more water.
- Colitis pain, felt in the lower left part of the abdomen is often from constipation caused by dehydration.
- Initially, rheumatoid arthritic joints and their pain can be viewed as indicators of water deficiency in the affected joint cartilage surfaces.
- Dehydration can be one of the factors that trigger migraine headaches.
- Stress can cause dehydration that further causes stress, and the spiral starts downward.
- High blood pressure may be an adaptive process to a gross water deficiency.
- Dry mouth is often one of the last indicators of dehydration.
- Current research shows dehydration in seniors is a major cause of dementia, which leads to falls and broken bones.

-Richard Lewis

INFORMATION WORTH KNOWING

Everyday we hear about another infection that does not respond to antibiotics. Germs seem to be getting smarter and lurk in our food, in child care facilities, and even in the air we breathe. *The Natural Health Guide to Beating the Supergerms*, written by Richard P. Huemer, M.D., and Jack Challem, gives recommendations and strategies for protecting yourself by making small lifestyle changes. Our questions this month are taken from their book.

Worldwide have always been the number one cause of death while in the United States the leading killers are heart disease and cancer.

- a. plagues
- b. infectious diseases
- c. accidents
- d. none of the above



Infectious diseases are becoming more widespread because

of

- a. indiscriminate use of antibiotics
- b, use of antibiotics in livestock
- c. commercial air travel allowing more people to spread disease
- d. all the above

One reason some people survive against supergerms when contacting the same deadly infection that kills others is that their immune system works better.

a. True

b. False

Although antibiotics often kill all infecting bacteria sometimes a few survive. Those few bacteria can reproduce rapidly to create 72 generations and 16 billion progeny with the same antibiotic-resistant gene in _____.

- a. one day
- b. one month
- c. one year
- d. ten years

Because people are eating so much better and we have cleaned the environment of most of the toxic element we are seeing a dramatic decrease in cancer.

a. True

b. False

effective and inexpensive supplement to take to help you achieve optimal health.

- a. Vitamin C
- b. Sugar
- c. Iron
- d. Glucosamine Sulfate

Unlike conventional antibiotics, can kill some viruses, including herpes simplex and rhinovirus (common cold virus).

- a. glucosamine sulfate
- b. aspirin
- c. echinacea
- d. garlic

• FOR ANSWERS, SEE PAGE 7 •

Share information about The Center with your family and friends by inviting them to visit our Internet websitel. Meet us at the following address: http://www.brightspot.org or correspond with us by E-mail: healthcoach@southwind.net.

Case of the month

This patient is a 51-year-old female who has had problems since the fifth grade. At that time her doctor started her on thyroid.

She first came to The Center in 1988 with complaints of inflamed tissues and muscles, swollen lymph glands, severe headaches, fatigue, constant muscle spasms, diminished vision, constipation—and the list goes on.

This spring she was feeling considerably better (which can be dangerous). She decided to drop the thyroid she had been taking since the fifth grade. Even though her energy slowly inched downward, she had no major consequences until June, when a business trip overloaded what little hormone reserves she had left.

This showed up first as frequent urinary tract infections, a little known symptom of low thyroid. She was extremely fatigued, with fever and chills, to where it was difficult to get out of bed.

We see many patients who have a sluggish thyroid, but are not hypothyroid by medical standards. In this case, she was full blown hypothyroid.

In August, we tested her thyroid. Her T4 level was almost zero. It was amazing to see a person walking with a level this low. Her T3, the other part of the thyroid test, was elevated. After taking natural thyroid again, her T4 is coming up, T3 is coming down, and she is getting back in balance.

Because her low thyroid had depleted her immune system, she had developed a high Epstein-Barr virus level. We started her on intravenous vitamin C. We also found that she had a parasite and treated her for that. As one leading expert on parasites told us, "the best way to keep parasites out is to have a strong immune system." She also started back on natural thyroid.

After working with her to get her thyroid balanced and get her biochemistry back in shape, she is making headway again.

We learned from this that if you are going to make a major change, especially on a hormone type program, you should consult with someone and see about the advisability of it before you make the change.

Cataracts

Here I am again talking about cataracts. But our vision is so important, I feel I need to visit with you one more time on ways to help you preserve this very valuable asset.

We learned, from a recent Lunch and Lecture presented by Hugh Riordan, M.D., and Donald R. Davis, Ph.D., from the University of Texas in Austin, how our intake of sugar adds to the development of cataracts. Just one more reason for us to be ever mindful of our intake of those sweets we like so much.

We need to stop and think, "Would I rather have this sweet cookie or would I rather work at preventing those cataracts from forming." Of course, you know it is not just one cookie today, but the accumulation of those sweets, meal after meal and day after day, that really causes the build-up. But we need to be aware of how sugar plays such an important role in the slow, but sure, development of this "robber of our vision."

Also, there is something more I need to say about vitamin C. I have been reading more and more about various tests being performed to determine the value of vitamin C. Some of the tests suggest that, as a help in the preservation of our vision, we supplement our daily food intake with 150 to 250 mg of vitamin C. I am sure this amount can be beneficial, but it is really a drop in the bucket compared to my daily intake of this valuable vitamin. This report just confirms what I have said before, "Vitamin C is truly the exceptional nutrient."

So we all, as we are aging, need to be aware of our daily intake of sugary items and vitamin C supplements to help keep our eyes clear.

-Nelda Reed

Great men...men who struggle alone for a great cause, are like great rivers. Debris may block their waters, but it never stops them from flowing.

-Felix Marti-Ibanez

Ukrainian Folk Medicine

by Sergey M. Nesterishin, M.S.D.

Beets

For Ukrainians, beets are one of the favorite vegetables. Borsch, a soup made with sour cream that has become a national specialty, gets its rich, red color from the beets used as a main ingredient. Following close behind borsch as a national favorite is a salad made with beets, walnuts, and garlic, dressed with sour cream.

Ukrainians feel that beets are the best natural remedy for clearing the human organism of the products of nuclear decomposition. Beets also are used to stimulate regeneration of human blood, especially platelets and erythrocytes.

Beets and beet juice contain a significant quantity of iodine, along with sodium and calcium. This, Ukrainians believe, is very valuable in dissolving calcium, which has a tendency to accumulate in the blood vessels as a result of eating too much boiled food.

The chlorine content in beets works very well to clean the liver, kidney, and bile bladder, and to improve the lymph activity.

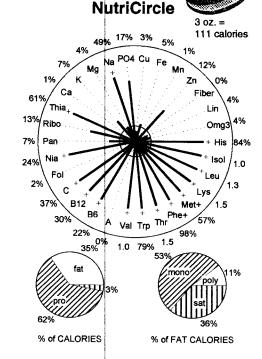
The taste of raw beet juice is rather strong by itself, so it is usually combined with carrot juice and honey to make a pleasant and healthful drink. For cancer, anemia, fever, liver disease, intestinal tract and lymphatic ganglion illness, and obesity, Ukrainians drink 20 oz. of raw beet juice combined with honey or in combination with carrot juice in a 1 to 4 ratio.

As well as onion, garlic, and carrot juice, beet juice is used in Ukrainian folk medicine to treat colds. For this purpose, place 10 drops of beet juice into each nostril 10 to 12 times a day.

Food of the Month

by Donald R. Davis, Ph.D.

HAM is a traditional holiday roast. The lean ham shown here (5% fat by weight) gets only 35% of its calories from fat. The low saturated fat content and good balance between omega-3 (Omg3) and omega-6(Lin) fats are more like chicken than beef. Besides the abundant amino acids of protein (His... Val), ham is rich in thiamin, vitamin B12 and other vitamins. It is a good source of zinc and is at least adequate in 23 of 30 nutrients shown here. Added vitamin C helps prevent harm from the nitrates used in curing. A good way to compensate for the saltiness of ham (Na) is to reduce the salt used in accompanying dishes.



The length of each bar shows the amount of one nutrient. If a bar extends out to the inner circle, the food has enough of that nutrient to match the calories it contains. The numbers show nutrient amounts in RDAs per serving shown. The pie charts show the sources of calories (left) and the types of fat (right).

Mental Medicine

by Marilyn Landreth, M.A.

Choices

This month I would like to share some observations about the people who come to The Center as part of their quest for better health. For the most part, they have already been through standard medicine and told there is nothing more that can be done for them.

But they don't give up. They look around for other solutions. This search leads them to The Center. They learn about the type of medicine practiced here by taking tours, talking to staff, attending Luncheon Lectures, reading printed material such as the Health Hunter, or hearing treatment success stories.

Tenacity and spirit are hallmarks of these health quest hunters. Their symptoms range from moderate to extremely serious. Many patients come with a willingness to experience an alternative way of looking at their disease, to learn as much as possible and, at the same time, to teach us as well.

One factor most of them have in common is that they don't give up easily.

from cancer; he was living because of the cancer. His disease had taught him what was important. He found his priorities. He made several major decisions that he might not have made until much later in life because of the disease. He also developed an appreciation for all the many gifts he had received in life rather than focusing on what he did not have.

From patients/co-learners such as this one, I have learned that I may not always have a choice about what happens to me in life. I do have a choice in the way I respond to life. I don't have to wait until I am diagnosed with a life threatening illness before I learn to focus on what is important to me, to be thankful for all the many gifts that life has bestowed upon me, and to rejoice in this moment without fear of what might happen in the future.

One man told me he wasn't dying

Which is better, hormone replacement therapy or phytoestrogens?

Two new studies published in The Lancet shed some light on the question about which is better, hormone replacement therapy or getting phytoestrogens (phyto means food based) from foods rich in the natural product.

The first article supports the consumption of foods rich in phytoestrogens. Phytoestrogens are found in soy products, such as tofu, as well as in the fiber of whole grains, berries, fruit, vegetables, and flax seed.

"Our study shows that increased excretion of some phyto-oestrogens [the British spelling] is associated with a substantial reduction in breast-cancer risk," wrote Dr. David Ingram and his colleagues at Queen Elizabeth II Medical Centre in Perth, Australia.

For this study, Dr. Ingram and his colleagues interviewed 144 women with newly diagnosed breast cancer and matched them to healthy women. All women had a urine test to check for phytoestrogens. Those with the greatest excretion of phytoestrogens had the lowest risk of breast cancer.

Prevention of breast cancer by eating foods high in phytoestrogens is the best way to reduce the suffering of women who have breast cancer and reduce the high costs of treating the cancer, Ingram added.

The following week in The Lancet, hormone replacement therapy (HRT) was shown to cause breast cancer.

In this study, led by Professor Valerie Beral with the Imperial Cancer Research Funds Cancer Epidemiology Unit in Oxford, England, the researchers reviewed the data from 51 separate studies of more than 150,000 women from 21 countries. From this data, they clearly established the connection between breast cancer and HRT.

This information about the breast cancer connection "allows women to make a more informed decision about HRT use," said Dr. Gillian Reeves, with the Imperial Cancer Research Fund.

CENTER UPDATE

Peanuts good for the heart

Recent research supports what Donald Davis, Ph.D., a researcher with the University of Texas, Austin, has been saying for years. Nuts are a hearthealthy food.

Dr. Davis quotes research papers showing that fats found in nuts and peanuts are actually heart protective because they provide essential fatty acids most Americans usually don't get in ample quantities. (Peanuts aren't actually nuts; they are a legume.)

In a new study, sponsored by the Peanut Institute, researchers found that peanuts, along with other nuts, contained more to help the heart than just the good fatty acids.

Timothy Sanders and Robert McMichael, with the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Raleigh, N.C., Agri-



cultural Research Center, wanted to find out if peanuts contained resveratrol.

Resveratrol is a substance found in red wine that gives the wine its heart protective capabilities.

Testing both Spanish and Virginia peanuts from different locations in the country, they found that the humble goober pea did indeed contain resveratrol—on the average of 73 micrograms per ounce. Red wine contains 160 micrograms per ounce.

This means that to get the same protective amount of resveratrol from peanuts as from a 5 oz. glass of wine, one would need to eat 11 oz. of peanuts.

But peanuts have the added heart protective power of the fatty acids lacking in the wine. And, one can eat peanuts while driving. HH

Answers from page 4

b. Infectious disease is the fastest growing cause of death in the United States.

d. Nutritional deficiencies and deforestation, especially of the rain forests, has played a part in the proliferation of supergerms.

a. Immune systems can be strengthened or weakened by our lifestyle, especially our diet.

a. In comparison, it would take a family three thousand years to create 72 generations.

b. We are seeing an increase in cancer as a consequence of poor diet and exposure to toxic waste. Hopefully, someday we can answer this question in the affirmative.

a. Vitamin C is not manufactured in our bodies so we need to get it through our diets or through supplementation. Judging by the amount we ingest every year, Americans seem to think that sugar is what is needed most by the body, .

d. Aspirin, acetaminophen, and other over the counter remedies can encourage bacterial resistance to antibiotics, leading to more resistant strains.

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PREVENTING HEART DISEASE

with Ron Hunninghake, M.D.

Heart disease is our nation's #1 killer in both men and women. Until recently, lowering cholesterol, controlling blood pressure and weight, and regular exercise were thought to be the only legitimate prevention strategies. Now a virtual explosion of studies are demonstrating the protective value of antioxidants, most notably vitamins E and C and selenium. These and many more biological therapies are discussed in this tape. Audio cassette & video tape.

INTESTINAL PARASITES

with Neil Riordan, P.A.-C

Untreated parasites cause a wide array of symptoms such as fatigue, rashes, irritable bowel, irritability, diarrhea, arthritis, and constipation. They often go undetected and untreated. Parasite prevention, treatment, and cases of people who stopped ailing after getting rid of parasites is presented. Listen to find out how to know if you have parasites and how cassette & video tape.

FIBROMYALGIA: PART II - Unraveling the Causes

with Ron Hunninghake, M.D.

The entire focus of The Center's approach to any chronic illness involves the intensive search for the causes that are coming together in a unique way in the individual patient. This presentation takes an in-depth look at how clues in each patient's history can be linked to laboratory studies to find actual causes of imbalances that can be corrected. Audio cassette & video tape.

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DECEMBER

LUNCH AND LECTURE CLASSES:

3 Eat Your Way to Natural Weight Loss

4 Would You Rather be a Prune or a Plum?





Vitamin D often low in elderly

Healthy bones depend, in part, on vitamin D levels in the blood. Calcium is the other important variable.

Older participants in the Framingham Study, according to a new report in *The American Journal of Clinical Nutrition*, are quite often low in vitamin D circulating in the blood plasma.

This is correctable, according to Paul Jacques, M.D., the study's lead researcher. The first step he suggests is get out and get some sunlight daily. A good way to do this, besides sitting out and reading, is go for a walk during the day. The walk will help the bones take up calcium.

Supplements are another way to increase vitamin D levels. This is more important for women than men, according to the researchers, but may be needed by both to get the plasma levels up to the levels needed for bone health.

INSIDE THIS MONTH'S ISSUE . . .

- Imagination: a tool for change
- trans fatty acid's effect on health
- Water, weight loss, and other problems
- Which is better, hormone replacement therapy or phytoestrogens?

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