

Contents

How to Use an Applied Meditation CD:..... 1

Working with Applied Meditation 3

How to Use your CD:

- Create a comfortable place to listen to the CD uninterrupted. Turn off your phone and put a sign on your door so you won't be disturbed.
- Have a blanket handy to keep warm.
- Sit or lie down with your back straight. Feel free to adjust your position as needed.
- Relax, open your imagination and give yourself permission to enjoy your experience.
- If tension arises, use your breath to release it.
- If you lose your focus of attention, or want to deepen your experience, simply focus on the sensations of your breath, then return your attention to where you left off.
- Use the lines in the meditation as prompts. Work with what spontaneously pops into your awareness. Give detail to your imaginings by using your story-making capacities—don't wait for something to come to you—just notice what is happening and fill in the blanks with your imagination.
- Enter the childlike world of make believe; assume everything you come across on your meditation journey can speak to you.
- Strive to have a positive vision; when this proves difficult, have an imaginary conversation with what concerns you.
- Follow the suggestions as you hear them, and also feel free to ignore them whenever you would like to spend more time focusing on something that has come up for you, then tune back in when you are ready. (Of course, you can also use the pause button on your CD player, keep your remote handy.)
- After you return to an outer focus of attention, take a moment to jot down or draw in a journal any insights, agreements and challenges that emerged.

- Listen to the tracks on the CD regularly and frequently to increase the benefits.

These meditations are designed to be used time and again. Inner consciousness loves the familiar and repetitious. Hearing the same words over and over creates a sense of safety, allowing you to keep delving deeper. Repeat listenings will create new neural pathways, keeping you aligned with your health goals and keep your healing path clear and accessible.

You'll find that you work with the meditations in different ways at different times, working with some sections on one listening and other sections another time. Sometimes you'll actively engage with what you hear, other times you'll hear it in the background of your awareness, and occasionally you'll feel as though you slept through it. If this happens be assured that your unconscious mind hears the meditation and is working from a deeper level. We recommend that you create a regular time in your routine to listen to a meditation.

Working with Applied Meditation

Applied Meditation can help you meet the multiple health challenges. Working with your mind's connection to your body will enable you to become an active participant in your healing journey. You will find it easier to manage stress, to be in tune with your body's needs, maintain healthy habits, and it will help your body too.

Body/mind medicine has gained increased legitimacy over the last couple of decades. Medical research has shown that the mind and body are continually under one another's influence. There have been many hundreds of studies that demonstrate the body/mind connection. In one powerful study, participants listened to a mindfulness visualization audio recording when standing in a light box to treat their psoriasis. Those who listened to the recording healed four times faster than those who did not.¹

Research findings show that through hypnosis, imagery, and/or meditation people have been able to reduce stress, increase immune function, decrease liver inflammation, diminish the side effects of chemotherapy, and reduce pain. In addition, studies have shown that people can reduce blood loss, have fewer complications and quicker wound healing related to surgery, and lessen the impact of post-traumatic stress syndrome, bulimia and multiple sclerosis.² Though we tend to view our bodies and minds as separate, they are not. They are both parts of our whole self and are in perpetual, intimate connection with each other. The mind's influence on the body can be negative as well as positive.

Applied Meditation is a practice that I have evolved over the last 30 years. It is an approach that synthesizes aspects of mindfulness meditation, imagery, visualization and hypnosis. It works with the imagination to make suggestions to yourself (which I call the Active Imagination) and to ask yourself questions to draw out your intuition (which I call the Receptive Imagination). In addition to the active and receptive uses of the imagination, Applied Meditation also works with mindfulness, which is simply noticing *what happens* when you make suggestions or pose questions.

Our imagination is an avenue through which the body and mind continuously communicate. Vividly imagine taking a bite out of an apple and you salivate, imagine yourself confronted by a mad dog and your adrenalin pumps, look at erotica and your body is aroused. Through Applied Meditation you can actively engage with your healing process both by influencing what is happening and by attuning to what is going on inside your body.

Of equal importance, you can work with Applied Meditation to increase your ability to take good care of yourself and maintain a healthy lifestyle. We are creatures of habit, so making the behavioral changes that liver care asks for can be very challenging. The meditative state is receptive and suggestible. The simple act of envisioning yourself acting on what you know is good for your body when you meditate transforms your spontaneous inclinations. You'll find it much easier to make the choices that promote your health as you move through daily life.

You'll find a mix of the ordinary and extraordinary when working with your inner consciousness. For instance, one person using visualization to help him heal his cancer used the imagery of white blood cell rabbits eating their way through a field of carrot cancer cells. Then one day when he was doing his routine visualization he found that the rabbits couldn't find enough to eat. At his next doctor visit he was told that the cancer was gone. Mysteriously, his imagination had shown him what was happening inside his body in a direct and intimate way.⁴

Stories like this make our rational mind go nuts—there is no explanation that will satisfy it. Luckily, it is not the rational mind that is needed for Applied Meditation, so its judgments are inconsequential. When you relax, the playful character of inner consciousness comes forth. Enter the world of make believe; offer your body the gift of good images and sensations and you'll find that your body responds in kind. As you witness your imaginary process, you'll find yourself with a sense of knowing what is happening in your body. Your rational mind is likely to dismiss this knowing but on a deeper level there is a part of you that simply knows that it “feels right.” Trust this sense.

We are taught to use our rational minds but have little, if any, training in the use of the imagination, intuition and the soft awareness present when we're relaxed. Working with inner consciousness is entirely different and often the opposite of what we have been taught to believe. We are trained to believe statements such as: to make it up is breaking the rules; to be spacey is irresponsible; if an answer is cliché it should be dismissed; listening to voices in your head is a sign of instability; what you imagine is, by definition, not true. This work turns all of this around. The inner dimensions need a different set of principles to inform your navigation. If you use the criteria we normally apply you'll most likely dismiss the most important aspects of your experience. Keep the following in mind as you work with the meditations:

Working with a familiar state of awareness Unlike other forms of meditation, this practice does not involve emptying the mind but simply engaging a different aspect of consciousness than most of us are used to working with. It is a very familiar state of consciousness—the one that is present when you do not need to pay attention to what is taking place in your mind. It is a “day dreamy” state in which thoughts seem to slow down and begin to meander. This is when the imagination becomes more active. Your mind is in this state whenever you are on “auto pilot”; (semi-colon outside quotes, comma inside quotes – either one would be ok here) that is, when you don't need to think about what you are doing next. For example, rhythmic exercise will induce this state because you are not using your rational mind to determine what to do next. Many creative people report that they get their best ideas when they are jogging or doing laps. (If you like, feel free to listen to this CD when you are exercising.)

Relax and let go The good news is that Applied Meditation does not take effort. You just let go, relax and let your imagination take you on a journey—have fun. If you are not sure if you are doing it correctly, relax and pretend that you are.

Breath holds the key to inner dimensions. Full and easy breath brings about a relaxed state, awakens your imagination, makes your creativity and intuition more accessible, and opens consciousness to be able to bear witness to what is taking place. Your breath is your anchor. It will always help you

release tension, focus where you choose and maintain an open state of awareness. You'll find that this practice will make a big difference in your ability to relax and focus in your daily activities as well.

Distractions People usually think that to meditate it has to be quiet and peaceful; this is nice but not essential. When you meditate you become more aware of what is taking place both inside and around you. It is when you relax that you notice how tense you are. Remember, awareness and attention are not the same thing! Just because a clock is ticking doesn't mean you have to listen to it. Just let it be and focus where you choose.

Spacing out There is both a "spacey" and spacious quality to inner consciousness; you'll often find that you drift off during the meditations. That is okay -just bring your attention back to your breath and then continue where you left off. (It is important to be mindful of just where you drifted to, because you might find that your inner consciousness is offering an insight clothed in metaphor.) Your inner consciousness is used to being ignored; it is fluid and doesn't want to be disciplined. As a result it can be rebellious and bring in distracting imagery or weird bodily sensations or it simply wanders off somewhere that it finds more interesting. Don't worry, just refocus on breath and continue your inner work.

Ways the imagination works Each of our five senses have corresponding inner experience brought through the imagination. People tend to have a dominant mode ~ some feel things in their bodies, some see, some hear, some smell, and sometimes there is a knowing with no corresponding sense. Whatever happens when you focus your attention into your inner realms is fine.

Rational consciousness judges, divides and categorizes The rational mind understands the world logically. That is, through cause and effect and "either/or" thinking. It is often threatened by working with the holistic aspects of consciousness. It continually judges what's taking place by inserting discounting messages, such as telling you that you are not relaxed enough or that the insight that just surfaced is hokey. Do not take this as a sign of failure; to the contrary, the

judgments tend to get louder when you are onto something important. Remember that during meditation what your rational mind thinks is inconsequential—don't fall into the trap of either believing it or arguing with it. Just let it be. Give your rational mind a back row seat from which it can offer its critiques and keep your inner work on "center stage."

Inner consciousness lives in the perpetual here and now Using these meditations is not a linear process in which you receive the instructions and then go about carrying them out; instead, you are working at the same time as you hear them. If you hear "rose" you don't have to go find it in your memory banks in order to imagine it. The instant you get the idea it is present in your imagination. The phrases in the meditations angle the light of your awareness. Your job is to watch for what instantly comes into view.

Use the story-making capacities of your imagination and fill in your responses with as much detail as you can. Imagine the look, feel, smell, taste of what you are focusing on. This process brings insight when you are mindful of what happens as you engage. The imaginal realm is mysterious; if you work with it long, you'll find that *how* you imagine what you imagine symbolically represents what is true for you at that moment (like the rabbit running out of carrots to eat). Unlike rational knowledge which can be logically explained, intuition is simply present and you never know why you know what you know.

Upon hearing a suggestion, if nothing seems to come into awareness, make it up. What you make up more often than not turns out to be real. You could make up a million things; what you do make up is significant. It is your instantaneous responses to what you hear in the meditation that bring insight. This is also true when you pose questions to yourself. You'll find that the answer comes into view simultaneous to your question coming into focus. Unlike our usual experience in which one asks a question and then the answer comes from elsewhere, in the imaginal dimension it comes at the same time and feels as though it comes from the same place as well. This brings the feeling that the insight you get you had all along. That's okay, the point is that the insight itself is helpful.

Inner Witness The quirky ways of the imagination can only be appreciated if you have relaxed into the soft and spacious awareness of the inner witness. You might think of it as the space of the heart. There is a detached yet compassionate quality to it—a feeling of wholeness. The inner witness never does anything, it simply observes. This aspect of consciousness is what recognizes the answers that feel right to you; it notices the movement and quality of energy. That is, if there is openness present or if constriction, excess or stagnation has set in. Needless to say, this is crucial information for you to know where attention is called for. You need the presence of your inner witness to recognize intuition's offerings. You can hone your ability to be mindful by simply focusing on breath and being aware of all sensations present. Always feel free to do this when listening to the meditations.

Projecting the positive Our bodies and our behavior are continually responding to the images we hold in our mind. If this was not true we would not salivate when reading a menu. Inner consciousness is suggestible because it does not understand

Making your own Placebos

Our bodies are totally loyal to our beliefs, which in turn dictate our expectations. A Japanese study with children who were allergic to the Japanese equivalent of Poison Oak demonstrates this phenomenon. Doctors told the children they were going to rub their arms with the noxious plant and actually used benign elm leaves instead. Their skin blistered anyway. Conversely they said they were rubbing their skin with benign elm leaves and rubbed it with the noxious plant -this time their skin did not blister. ⁴ In a study of patients undergoing knee surgery for arthritis, there was a group who thought they were undergoing surgery but actually only had an incision while the surgeon acted as though he was performing surgery. These patients fared as well as those who actually had surgery!⁵

The placebo effect is thought to account for at least 30% of response to treatments.⁶ Your body is continually responding to your expectations. Always notice what assumptions you hold about what is going to transpire. When meditating you are in a suggestible state so you can begin to replace negative expectations with positive messages. Build faith in your positive experience, remember wellness. Turn negative messaging around—like Robin did when, rather than concluding that she was unlikely to respond to treatment given that 88% of the people in her situation wouldn't, she decided she would be in the 12% that theoretically would respond.

To transform negative expectations into positive, imagine the negative message dropping into the ground to be transformed into nutrients for new experience, then as much as you can muster, imagine yourself embodying the experience you would prefer and make yourself an affirmation that represents this positive experience you are cultivating. (see below) Your deep conscious mind will respond and you'll find that change **starts happening naturally.**

negatives. Whether you hear “imagine a lemon” or “do not imagine a lemon,” the image of a lemon is there either way. This is why it is crucial to always strive to move the focus of your attention from difficulties into what would be better. For example, when your throat feels scratchy, you can’t tell your body to stop feeling that, but you can imagine drinking soothing syrup. In meditation, you can counter negative self-talk by offering yourself messages that you would prefer to give life to. Just imagine that the positive message has already happened in as much detail as you can, and feel what that is like in your body. As a result, you’ll align with the projection and you’ll find that you intuitively act in accord with it.

When you have no positive vision, invite insight Positive experience often eludes us when we are focusing on what is challenging. Your inner witness notices when you are preoccupied with a negative scenario, or if a positive projection feels superficial or is not quite plausible. When you can’t find a positive perspective to move toward then you’ll want to work with the receptive abilities of your imagination, to gain an insight that illuminates new possibilities or enables you to come to peace with the current limitation. What you cannot imagine reveals exactly where attention is called for. Always note what comes easily and what doesn’t. You can think anything you like but imaging what it would actually be like is another matter. When this happens, personify the challenging issue, whether it is an area of inflamed tissue of your liver, or a part of you that engages in unhealthy behavior. This gives a focal point that you can interact with. Pretend that the personification of the challenge is intelligent and talk with it. This process provides a way for your intuition to reveal what’s happening.

Paradoxically, when you give yourself permission to “make it up,” you find out what is true for you. Ask the personification what it wants, what its concerns are, what it is protecting itself from. Remember, you may find yourself with an answer as you formulate the question. The important thing is that you will be attuned to helpful information. Often the answers that come through are cliché or trite. It is in these dimensions that we experience the universal. Something has become cliché because it is true for so many—that does not make it wrong. (If when you focus on the

challenge you find tension coming up, simply breathe through it. Focus on your breath and you'll find that a sense of spaciousness returns. Do this as often as you need to.)

Making agreements, keeping promises When insight comes through, imagine what you will do with it. Make agreements with yourself and imagine carrying them out. This sets the stage for change. Often people come up with more agreements than they are able to keep. Be patient with yourself. In meditation there are no limits of space and time—sometimes it takes a lot longer to incorporate change into your life than you expected. If this happens it is important that you go back into meditation and talk it over so that your deeper self builds trust in you rather than feels let down by your not following through.

Keep a journal It is important to keep a journal of your experience when you meditate. It is good to write down insights, agreements, affirmations and challenges that you would like to keep working with. Insights are only helpful if you act on them. If you make agreements with yourself and break them then your deeper self won't be as cooperative in the future. You build trust in your experience as you take it seriously. Keeping track will also help you see the difference that Applied Meditation is making in your life; the more you experience it working, the more you expect it to work in the future.

Healing is sacred / Open to your own reverence
The work of healing is sacred. People have different beliefs and practices that enable them to open to heart, spirit, God, the divine, the mystery of life. The meditations do not specify but it is important that you tune to what is sacred for you. There is a section of each meditation that invites you to remember your

Working with Others.

I recommend that you gather with others and meditate together. Join a healing circle or organize one. You'll find that your meditations are more potent. When we meditate together it is as though we turn up the volume of our experience -it is no longer as difficult to hear the whispers of intuition. In addition we can support each other by channeling healing energy and tuning in to see what is true at the moment. Just as in daily life, we can often be clearer about another than ourselves. When you work in a healing Circle you can get the advantage other people's sense of what is happening. We are social beings, studies have shown that women with breast cancer who participated in a support group fared better as compared to their solitary counterparts. Prayer has been known to work for millennia—science now shows that it does as demonstrated by many studies.⁷
(See our website to join or find others to organize an Applied Meditation Healing Circle.)

gratitude. This is a good time to deliberately open to what you believe to be the source of healing: life's resilience, God, Christ, The Great Spirit... When you access your experience of the sacred, however you experience it, you increase the power of these meditations many fold.

Always listen to quiet inclinations The meditations awaken intuition. You have to be listening to hear its whispers. You'll find impulses pointing you in new directions arising both in meditation and during daily life. These messages are your best guides to keep you on your healing path. It is up to you to notice and act on them.

Keeping your healing path clear You may not find that daily listening works for you, in which case, take just a couple of minutes and bring to mind the positive images and insights from previous meditation sessions, using your symbols and affirmations to reinforce your intentions. Regularly focusing on them keeps you on your healing path and the pathway of communication between body and mind is kept clear and accessible. This can be done by simply making a habit of focusing on your healing symbol every time you are in the shower or going to work. Post your affirmations where you'll keep seeing them. You'll find the rhythm that works best for you.

1. Jon Kabat-Zinn, *Coming to Our Senses* (Hyperion,2005) 363.
2. Herbert Benson, M.D., *Timeless Healing* (Scribner,1996) 125-148.
- M. Caudill, *Managing Pain Before it Manages You* (Gilford Press,1994).
- Harris Dienstfrey; Mind and Mindlessness in Mind-Body in *Consciousness and Healing: Integral Approaches to Mind-Body Medicine*, Marilyn Schlitz and Tina Amorok (Elsevier,Inc.2005) 56.
- Invisible Heroes ,Survivors of Trauma, and How They Heal*, Belleruth Naparstek (Bantam Books, 2005).
- Brent Maguire, Ph.D., The Effects of Imagery on Attitudes and Moods in Multiple Sclerosis Patients; *Alternative Therapies*, September 1996 Vol. 2 no.5.
<http://www.thehealingmind.org/research/PainRelief.rtf> .
3. Alan Franciscus, Stress and the Liver, *HCV Advocate*, April 2006, vol.9; 44 (source article: Does Stress exacerbate Liver Diseases?; Y. Chida, N. Sudo, and C. Kubo. *Journal of Gastroenterology and Hepatology*, 20:202, 2006).
4. Carylr Hirshberg, Living with Cancer: from Victim to Victor, the Integration of Mind, Body, and Spirit in *Consciousness and Healing*, 163.
5. Harris Dienstfrey, Mind and Mindlessness in Mind-Body Research in *Consciousness and Healing*,57 and 59.
6. Bruce Lipton, Ph.D, *The Biology of Belief: Unleashing the Power of Consciousness, Matter and Miracles*; (Elite Books,2005) 139.
7. Larry Dossey, M.D., *Prayer is Good Medicine* (HarperSanFrancisco, 1996).

Daniel Goleman, Support Groups and Cancer Survival, *New York Times*, September 15, 1993.