

Session 1 - What is Creative Visualisation?

Visualisation, or a more the proper title of Creative Visualisation serves a number of functions, it can provide the means to enjoy successful meditation, aid with healing, take you on a journey to your inner self, bring about change in your life, or provide the basics to enable journeys and ritual practice on what is generally referred to as other planes.

For brevity sake I will refer to myriad number of planes as the Astral Plane as this is where most end up, but it can be any plane you desire, the point being is that we are looking at is the difference between physical and non-physical working. As well extra-planar travel, any reference to visualisation I make will generally cover that and your own mind scape and/or creative effort. This is because I see the transition from your mind to planar travel as a seamless transition.

As the both subject matters are vast I will touch on many common themes between the two usually taught spheres. Obviously most aspects discussed here are my personal opinions if you don't agree with me, or you have a question then just ask in local chat or IM me if it's personal. I welcome a fair amount of discussion on this subject during the sessions, because as I say, what I am presenting are my personal view and others views will vary. We can all learn something from others experiences.

However you do need to find your own way and I frequently say, read extensively, question everything and go with what you feel is good and right to YOU.

To help understand where I am coming from, an brief description of my path may be in order. What I understand and have experienced about these subjects has been greatly coloured by my guide Selket who has been with me since I was very little on a solitary path. So what I've found has been self taught from reading and from what guidance Selket has given me, some of which may sound a little odd from what you've read or know but that's only because I may have discovered this or was guided to try that particular way as it's more suitable for me.

Back to the question then of what is visualisation? In it's simplest form it can be used as a tool to push desires and wishes to the subconscious mind or externally so that they can manifest in this reality (how this happens I won't be going into during these sessions). I will however discuss some of its practical processes as most practitioners of visualisation will have their own views on how it works, but we all have the similar views on how to drive it.

Whichever path you take with visualisation, to me it's primary function is to focus the mind and imagination to create imagery that can be a literal or symbolic representation of something that can be interacted with. Some examples being aspects of your own mind, spirits in the local area or higher powers meeting you half way between realities. I will be touching again on those aspects in a later session.

As far as what you can do with visualisation, there are few limits on it's list of features, and many of them I consider are successive stages in the process of using visualisation to higher goals. At the lowest level it gives the grounding in relaxation, gaining and maintaining a focused state of mind, another gives the mind something to actually work with, and once those skills are mastered then it can be used to create and maintain a convincing reality.

Setting The Environment

I consider the first principles are to do with setting the environment in which to work, here we must set our ground rules, many of which will be familiar and I wouldn't be surprised if you use them already for other things. Importantly, setting these ground rules enables the right focus and consistently doing them will enable you to become comfortable learning a new technique and provide a repeatable experience as a way to measure progress. This is important as early on there will be failure and it can be very disheartening if you can't repeat the workings so as to overcome the failure.

For me the following are the things I try to maintain each and every time I use these tools:

- Most often I prefer lighting low to dark. Bright light distracts my attention and if I close my eyes I don't get complete darkness, sometimes I can work in lighter environments though.
- Sit or lie down. I prefer to sit. Standing could be a problem, should you lose it enough to fall over and that's not helpful.
- Try to isolate daily life and distractions, kick the family out, or wait for them to go to bed or work or school etc.
- Noise can be distracting unless of course it forms part of the process. At least get rid of

annoying noises.

- If you can find somewhere outside to do this then all the better, in some woods, by the sea or water. Up a mountain, whatever feels good. And importantly safe from harm should you not have full attention. So no doing this while driving your car or riding a bike please!
- Room temp does not bother me unless its extreme hot or cold.
- Clothing loose depending on room temp. With or without I've tried and found no advantage either way.
- If you are finding it hard to empty your mind as they say, then try a candle or any bright point of light as it can help with a dark room to focus on a point and keep it from wandering.
- Try and ensure no one is going to walk in or try and talk to you. It takes enough effort when learning and there is nothing like almost getting there and the door bell or phone rings.
- Keep in mind the simplicity and belief and perhaps the naivety of a child's imaginative mind. They are open to so much more than us conditioned adults,.
- Keep food and drink to the minimum, just my preference, as I don't want to be uncomfortable.

Right frame of mind.

Most will understand this for any workings whether they are physical or not, you have to be in the right frame of mind, and that is be open with no day-to-day thoughts and worries in the way.

- Mood is also important. Be happy as they say!
- Calmness of mind. I have recently dusted off my Tai Chi books to revisit the calm and focus that comes from that form of martial art.
- Not tired.

- Mental stability. Any instability such as depression or anxiety will not necessarily cause a block, but it will impact the quality of the working and could throw up some surprisingly bad images. I've ignored this on occasion and immediately regretted it. This is due to subconscious aspects of your self coming through when you visual and might not be welcome to see nasty things coming back at you.
- Look at your relaxation methods but not too relaxed though, want to try avoid falling asleep, although sometimes it can't be helped.
- Avoid using substances as they can have unpredictable effects on this process, some of course say it's positive when you think about some elements of Shamanism, but I've never had the need to use them and don't think I've missed out because of it.

With practice you will come to realize what aspects of the environment and mood level are required for successful workings and those that have an impact on them. Take note of them and work with them knowing your limitations, it's not worth pushing in the wrong direction and doing yourself mental or physical harm.

Off we go!

So now we have our environment, the right mood and so we can move smoothly on to the next stage which is the actual methods we can use to trigger effective and vivid visualisation.

Many books are around to help you, all that I've seen contain at least one guided meditation as an example. They have never worked for me straight from the book and that may be the same for you, but long term but it's always worth a try if you are stuck for inspiration on how to get started, or for clues to help develop something more personal and hence more effective.

The book that got me started was *Applied Visualisation: A Mind-Body Program* by James Lynn Page (ISBN 0-572-01555-0) and I suggest trying a few books to see what might work for you, I will however use my personal and most frequently guided working later on.

In addition to a guided workings, I advise looking to apply other methods to boost the effects, one of which is the use emotional triggers. This works particularly well for me and serves two purposes, one as before about getting in the right frame of mind, the other as a way to draw myself into the working. It's not something I've come across in many books but perhaps the reason I find this highly effective for me is that I'm empathic and a typical Piscean and emotions are quite significant for me.

Taking this method further, there are a number of ways to achieve an emotion link, colours, sound, taste, visual, but my preference is sound or more specificity music. Music can be left on in the background with no direct focus required which makes it less intrusive through the working should I no longer require it's use. I will show my use of it later on with my guided working.

The idea with music is that I want to use music to trigger a positive state of mind with very strong pleasant emotions, it can be something that triggers memories of someone, a place, a thing I really love or a memory of an event.

Therefore the choice of music is very significant, and very personal. But that's good. I personally don't get on with the fancy meditation ones in the shops, and as I just said, I need a strong personal connection to it, so I use music from my past such as Wham, Kylie, Kate Bush, various dance, rock, jazz tracks. There are a number of key in my choice and it much depends on what I a going to use a particular track or set of tracks for, one important aspect is to avoid sudden changes in tempo (unless I need it to heighten the working). To illustrate here are a few of my choices:

- Careless Whispers by Wham (emotional tie).
- Kylie track called Slow (hypnotic beat good bass).
- A dance track called 'You've Got The Love' by the Source (combination of emotional tie and good bass),
- Ecci Mundi Gaudium by the Medeval Babes (a good high energy workout – but a bit too short so I put it on loop).
- And recently found 'Fiesta de Amor' by Inkubus Succubus (wave like feel with a few crescendos, feels like the sea).

Unless you already have a strong emotional tie to piece of music, you will need to build that association and that takes a lot of time and effort. Most of us have something that means something to us.

Same goes for other form of emotional inducement, be that a photograph, a painting, a smell, memory. Emotions have powerful mind altering properties that are well known, so use them, it could save you a lot of time and effort trying alternatives.

Whatever the method or combination of methods you use its important to use them repeatedly so that your mind and body becomes programmed.

Any questions or items to discuss?