

Visioning Future Time

by Margo Adair and Bill Aal

“ Above all, where there is no vision we lose the sense of our great power to transcend history and create a new future for ourselves with others... Therefore the quest is not a luxury; life itself demands it of us” --Vincent Harding

Some Things You Might Want To Say:

Our behavior is loyal to the images we have of the world. If we have no vision towards which to strive we recreate the same old patterns, no matter how well we understand how oppressive they are. Solely understanding the root causes of contemporary problems does not bring transformation. To bring about change we also need to know what we *want*. Anything that is created has to be imagined first.

Many of us never have been given permission to dream, much less to take our dreams seriously. Stretch your imagination; dream. Find/create a vision that inspires you! This is a time to unleash the imagination for visioning. Don't get caught up in the —how's it or —why's. It works best if you give your imagination the freedom to make up stories and fill in details.

If your belt is tight, loosen it so that you can breathe easily. It is good to close your eyes when you reflect, but do whatever is comfortable. If you prefer to keep your eyes open, then you might try maintaining a soft focus at a point on the floor that is about five feet in front of you.

The words are only creating a way for you to explore— ignore them if they are distracting.

When Leading The Meditation:

When you are leading, you will be more effective if you remember your own breath and breathe from your belly. Relaxation brings an opening of the imagination. Use as much of Part One as you like. Read only those parts of a meditation that you feel will be helpful and cut the rest This section will take 5 to 10 min.

Speak clearly and rhythmically. Leave ten-second silences periodically (two long breaths). Questions angle the light of awareness. Feel free to ask questions that inspire descriptions not explanations and always refer to the time in present tense. Repeating questions and inserting phrases like the following will help people imagine detail and keep focused:

Feel what it is like to actually be in this time. Imagine what is taking place between people. How does it feel? What is the mood? Give detail to the scene... etc...

Part I -- Relaxing Into Ourselves

Feel your body. Notice the position you are in. Imagine that your breath is as easy and relaxed as the breath of a sleeping baby...full and easy.... Feel the rise and fall of your belly as breath moves in and out of your body... Imagine your breaths are like waves caressing every cell of which you are composed. Every cell in your body breathes..... Breath washes through; imagine each exhalation carries away tensions....

Bring your attention to your mind. Be aware of the various thoughts moving through your mind.... Appreciate the expanse of awareness....To help your mind relax simply rest your attention on your breath.... Imagine as though your breath were like a breeze that clears the air, imagine sending your breath right through your mind. Breathe...and your mind opens. Feel your spacious awareness.... Breathe.... Sense lots of space for whatever thoughts cross the sky of your mind....

Pay attention to your heart...Give yourself permission to relax emotionally... Each time you exhale let go.... Breathe and let constriction go.... Feel your heart lighten.... Take time to appreciate your goodness.... Have compassion for yourself.... Feel yourself soften inside.... Feel your heart open.... However you experience it, let your heart relax into loving-kindness... Take time to bring to awareness what you are grateful for...to appreciate the goodness of life itself.... Let all of this have a quiet presence in the light of your awareness

Setting the Stage to Open the Imagination (optional: this will further arouse people's imagination)

When you relax and remember what matters, it is as though consciousness expands. In this space your inner visionary awakens and your imagination comes alive. In spacious awareness you can soar through time like a bird that soars in the sky. Imagine being carried by the breezes...relaxing into the breezes...high in the sky...floating through the air...supported by the air.... You can see whole landscapes below. Consciousness moves like the bird that glides through the air...relaxed, carried by the breezes....

This is adapted from Adair's book *Meditations on Everything Under the Sun* .

For information on the book see www.toolsforchange.org. Please write Margo what happens and send any visions that emerge.
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Part II -- **Visioning 25 Years Hence** (approx. 10 min.)

Imagine that you are traveling through time. You are about to land in a time 25 years ahead – a time when you can witness the fruits of all the work that has been done—*successful* work. You may land in your own life or in the life of a child you know who has grown up by 2028. (*snap your fingers*) It is now the year 2028. You are awakening in your bedroom. Imagine it.... Let your imagination paint the picture; make up a story. You get up in the morning. You go outside, how have things changed? All the work that has been done has been wildly successful and ideal have been actualized. Envision it as though it has already been brought about. What does it look like? How does it feel?

Today is a special day in the year 2028. Today is the day when everyone comes together and tells the stories of what they especially appreciate; what makes their hearts sing; what inspires their spirits. Imagine a gathering of people. Imagine who is there.... People begin to tell their stories. Stories that transport you into the very scenes they describe. ...into all kinds of settings.... What pictures get painted? Highlight some of the detail.... What is the sense you get of people's lives? ...Feel what it is like.... Explore this time. Imagine it in detail. Let your imagination paint the picture.

(Pause a breath between each of the following questions)

What are the stories you hear about how one another are cared for?

What do you hear about how work is done?

What projects are inspiring folks?

How do people connect with one another?

How do people get around?

What sources of energy are used?

What is happening with food?

How is the earth treated?

What special occasions are celebrated? How?

How do people relate to differences?

How are the children doing?

And the elders, what are they up to?

How is conflict worked through?

How are decisions made?

Notice the ways everyone's contributions are honored.

What kind of atmosphere is in public space when everyone can take it for granted that their basic needs are covered?

What is your daily experience?

Embody the ideal... *Be* the change you want to make.... Breathe in the mood of the time.... Whatever is created is imagined first. As you exhale breathe out the vision.... Imagine that it informs the air in present time.... The air glitters....

Notice what aspects of your experience you would like to share.... Notice what it inspires you to want to do now?.... Bringing your vision with you, make yourself ready to bring your focus out.... Open your eyes when you are ready.