

THE USE OF MENTAL IMAGERY IN PSYCHOSYNTHESIS

MARTHA CRAMPTON

Sir George Williams University Montreal

Because psychosynthesis is fundamentally an open system and a point of view, rather than a dogma or doctrine, fixed rules about the use of mental imagery in its practice do not exist. By definition, psychosynthesis is a process that occurs around the unifying center or self of an individual; the methods of work that such an individual develops will necessarily evolve from his own temperament and quality of being. Hence, though the overall perspective and goals are similar among practitioners of psychosynthesis, the methods employed vary considerably; this paper will focus primarily on the writer's own style of work.

Though mental imagery is an important tool in psychosynthesis, it is only one among a variety of methods employed in a therapeutic program, and will not be used in every case. In this sense, this method differs from onirotherapy and other approaches that use mental imagery as the crux of the therapy.

The crucial element in psychosynthesis is the relationship between the co-workers involved—traditionally called the therapist-patient relationship but which might more appropriately be called the traveler-guide relationship. The term "traveler," which is used by the Sufis to designate one who follows a spiritual path, confers more dignity upon the person than the term "patient," which emphasizes the passive, pathological, and negative aspects of his role. Moreover, the former term suggests that the person is going on a voyage of discovery and that he is making active efforts himself in order to get there, albeit guided by someone presumably more familiar with the path than he is himself. Dr. Medard Boss, in his book *A psychiatrist discovers India*, makes a very beautiful statement about this relationship. He quotes an Indian master:

For healing on a grand scale as for the curing of a single patient, the decisive thing is whether it is realized or not that the little human ego in reality is not there by grace of itself; that it can not manifest itself out of its own resources; that consequently it cannot stand alone; and that it can by no means depend only on itself. Rather, every little human ego is caught up in that all-encompassing spiritual element that we Indians call Brahman. The little human ego has to subordinate itself to this, to allow itself to be directed by it...One...recognizes in every patient who comes in quest of help a portion and a manifestation of the divine...one need only let the patient sense the genuineness of this knowledge, until the latter thereby becomes aware once again of his own divine nature [Boss, 1965].

This passage expresses eloquently the key quality that the therapist or guide must himself possess to as high a degree as possible—experiential knowledge of man's essential nature; he must be ever mindful of this in guiding the traveler along the path. Without this realization, there is no real understanding of the symbolism of the supraconscious that one encounters in mental imagery or of the guiding role of the transpersonal self; moreover, all "techniques" will be of little avail if not actually harmful from an ultimate point of view.

INTRODUCTORY TECHNIQUES

The first step in psychosynthesis, as in any therapy, is to establish rapport with the patient, to assess his problems and potentialities, and to actively involve him in the therapeutic process. Mental imagery techniques may sometimes play a useful role at this point, both in diagnosing and in helping the patient to see in a vivid manner what his problems are and to taste the kind of growth he may expect in therapy. It is not always possible to introduce visualization immediately with certain overly extraverted, rigidly compulsive, or hyper-intellectual types; however, when the rationale has been explained to them, most patients can accept the use of mental imagery techniques fairly readily. For example, one patient described her problem in the first session as having a dominating husband. She was asked to visualize the way she felt about this relationship and saw herself as a

little bird being tightly held in a clenched hand. The bird was frightened, helpless, and could not get away. It was then suggested that she imagine the hand opening, and she saw the bird fly away to a nearby branch. She was surprised to note, however, that the bird would not venture far from the hand and that it was a "sugar bird" that fed on sugar provided by humans, having forgotten how to get food for itself in the natural way and thus having to depend upon people to live. The patient was able to see through this visualization that she had allowed her husband to dominate her because she felt more secure being taken care of like a child. At this point she was asked to try to see the bird eating the kind of food that wild birds normally eat. She felt that the bird would have to move to another island where there was more vegetation and imagined riding a fishing boat since the other island was too far away to fly. The bird was happy to find that there were plenty of seeds to eat there and that he could also enjoy eating sugar from time to time for a treat. This session alone led to a marked improvement in the patient's relationship to her husband who was delighted, as it turned out, to have her assume more responsibility and independence and did not try to "crush" her as she had feared.

With a patient who finds it difficult to accept so readily the use of visualization, it is possible to initiate the dialogue between conscious and unconscious by other means that will prepare the way and may lead to the use of mental imagery techniques. It is frequently helpful to start with a dream or spontaneous drawing and to use this as a jumping-off point to introduce visualization procedures. For example, a patient made a free drawing of a crowded city, stating that this was where he felt most at home, although he did not attach any significance to the drawing. He was then asked what feelings were aroused in him as he contemplated the picture and reported feelings of being constricted and caged in. From here we moved into a mental imagery sequence where he was asked to visualize this caged-in feeling. He saw himself imprisoned as a spy in a small cell somewhere in a foreign country. His jailors gave him no opportunity to defend his point of view and were attempting to brainwash him into a confession of guilt. He felt frightened, helpless, and determined never to confess, feeling that the only possibility of escape was to "con" his way out by some lie. At this point it was explained to him that the various figures in a visualization—just like the figures in a dream—represent parts of himself with which he must come to terms. The next step in the mental imagery procedure was to help him identify with the different figures in the scenario—the persecutors as well as the persecuted—establishing a more human dialogue between them, and asking him to visualize how he played each role in his daily life. This gave him greater insight into his own needs for power and manipulation and brought back memories of how he, as a child, would "con" his parents by pretending to agree with them just to keep them quiet. Thus we see how a person can be led from a spontaneous drawing to visualization procedures that help to clarify the underlying feelings in the drawing and that help prepare him to accept the use of mental imagery as a valid path to self-knowledge.

The choice of method to be employed in a given session necessarily depends on the total situation at the moment, inasmuch as it is known. The spectrum of techniques employed in psychosynthesis tends to be considerably more varied than in most other approaches. Moreover, it is not the use of any technique or set of techniques as such that characterizes psychosynthesis, but rather the manner in which the techniques are used and the ends to which they are directed. It is considered desirable that a practitioner not be limited to any particular technique of psychotherapy such as mental imagery, but rather that he be able to choose from a gamut of methods the most suitable ones and that he be able to combine methods in a synergic way so that each method will enhance the value of the others.

COMBINATIONS OF TECHNIQUES

The writer has found that various mental imagery techniques combine effectively with dream analysis, spontaneous drawing, expressive movement, body awareness techniques, dialogue, psychodramatic and role-playing approaches, exercises to awaken the observer-self or "I" consciousness, and techniques of concentration and meditation—to mention the main ones only. When a dream is reported this usually makes a good starting point because it tends to be the most naked statement of the way things are. In the writer's practice, extended

onirodramatic sessions in a state of deep relaxation, such as those employed by Frétigny and Virel (Frétigny & Virel, 1968), or by practitioners of Desoille's waking dream method (Desoille, 1945, 1966), are reserved for exceptional occasions. Most mental imagery techniques employed are of a briefer sort, not requiring deep relaxation, and are generally combined with other methods.

In addition to their use during actual therapy sessions, mental imagery methods have the advantage of serving well as "homework" assignments whereby patients can constructively utilize the time between therapy sessions. They may be used either as exercises to develop and strengthen particular qualities, functions, and skills (such as concentration, will, self-observation, "I"-consciousness, etc. or they may be used to provide material for self-study or for discussion in the next therapy session (as when the patient is asked to visualize on a particular question or aspect of himself which has emerged in the previous session). It is also valuable to have patients meditate on positive symbols that either have been produced by the patient himself in dream, fantasy, mental imagery, or free drawing, or which have been chosen by the therapist from the field of universal symbolism or for a specific purpose. Such symbols include: symbols of integration around a central core (mandalas, sunflower or lotus, a radiant body such as a star or sun); basic geometric shapes; religious imagery (Christ, Buddha, icon, etc.); symbols of inner wisdom (such as the wise old man or priest with whom the subject can enter into dialogue, thus evoking inner guidance); symbols from nature (mountain, river, sea, etc.); symbols of growth and transformation (such as the opening of a rose, the growth of a tree, the cycle of wheat from seed to bread, the process of refining metal from ore, etc.); or symbols of constructive human relationships (such as building a temple or public building together with other people, rehearsing in imagination the successful enactment of a difficult interpersonal situation, expressing affection to or climbing a mountain with a person in the patient's life who has been feared or hated, etc.). Meditation upon a positive symbol can greatly enhance the effect of that symbol upon the mind and subtly or even dramatically transform the character. For just as the unconscious speaks to us in the language of images through dream and fantasy, so we can address the hidden portion of our minds in this "forgotten language," which is its native tongue.

As mentioned above, mental imagery can also be used between sessions to strengthen and develop latent qualities, functions, and skills. It is possible, for example, to use the exercise of holding a predetermined image on the "mind-screen" or of alternating one image with another to help a subject experience the difference between the contents of consciousness (the image) and the center of consciousness (the subject, self, or "I" that wills to hold the image in place). This exercise affords good training in concentration and will development, as well as being a school for humility; for one has only to try it for a few seconds to realize how difficult it is to hold an image without change and how little control one really has over his own mind. The greatest value of this exercise, however, lies in enabling a person to experience the self as a center of responsible power—however underdeveloped it may be—as an active agent potentially capable of effecting change. This insight, however basic it may appear, is not self-evident to many people. So it is important to convey the idea early in therapy that people can change and develop, and these simple exercises are often effective, particularly in a group setting, in helping to mobilize the resources for self-actualization.

Another method that may be used for a similar purpose is the "exercise of the witness" or training of the "observer self." This exercise is basic in yoga discipline, in the Buddhist schools of mind-development, in Gurdjieff's system, and is currently used in various forms in a number of psychotherapeutic schools (including the Vittoz method, Gestalt therapy, and Jungian analytical psychology, as well as in psychosynthesis). Basically, it consists of objectively registering or observing one's stream of consciousness without passing judgment on it or reacting in a positive or negative way. In other words, one learns to disidentify from the changing contents of consciousness and to identify with the source of consciousness, the "witness." At first the subject may be instructed to sit quietly and direct the attention in such a way as to focus on specific types of contents (e.g., physical sensations, visual images, emotions, thoughts); in more advanced stages he may try to achieve a more inclusive awareness and to maintain this attitude of objective, nonjudgmental observation of

oneself even in the midst of action. The latter, however, is very difficult and is more appropriate to a person who is well advanced on the path to self-realization than to the typical person in therapy. The interest of this exercise for the student of mental imagery lies in the technique for observing the flow of visual imagery, which is of great value for learning to "let go" and allowing things to happen in the psyche. This practice can help to overcome the excessive rigidity and rational control that cut one off from the renewing and transforming sources of life. It is also helpful in developing "I"-consciousness and an inner center. This "I" can experience itself as something separate from the thoughts, feelings, desires, sensations, and outer roles played in society and is thus less threatened by negative aspects and can gradually learn to integrate, harmonize, and direct them. This technique also helps teach dis-identification from what Jung has called the "objective psyche," thus liberating the patient from neurotic guilt about conditions that have "happened" to him and for which he is not able to be responsible.

DIRECTED AND SPONTANEOUS TECHNIQUES

It will be noted that the types of mental imagery techniques suggested to patients for work on their own are basically of the directed rather than the spontaneous type. This is for reasons of safety since the spontaneous imagery procedures can produce experiences that may be too disturbing for some people to handle by themselves. Moreover, in assigning some of the techniques discussed, a therapist must observe caution and know his patient well.

There is a place in psychosynthesis for both directed and spontaneous mental imagery and there are, of course, various degrees of both so that one finds more of a continuum than a sharp distinction between the two. Unless a directed technique has been chosen for a special purpose, it is the writer's practice to allow as great a degree of spontaneity as possible. Thus, in the more spontaneous types of mental imagery, the predetermined images are not suggested as a point of departure, unlike the Desoille and Leuner approaches (Leuner, 1969, Haronian, 1967). However, a specific problem, situation or dream symbol may be used as the point of departure, but the imagery used to expand this will come from the patient rather than from the therapist. In this manner one is more likely to start where the patient really is, and the idiosyncratic symbols he produces have a particular eloquence and appropriateness to the situation.

In the most spontaneous type of mental imagery, one can simply ask the subject to close his eyes and report what he sees on the mind-screen. This should be allowed to develop as freely as possible with the therapist intervening only when necessary to offer support or guidance. In this type of setting in which it is desired to have the patient enter fully into his own world, it is preferable to use the reclining position and to obtain a state of deep relaxation, though this does not seem to be necessary for many of the other mental imagery procedures. A session of this kind often leads to abreaction and the reliving of repressed memories and fixations. In this case, unlike the exercise of the witness, full emotional response and catharsis are encouraged. The therapist may then help the patient work through these disturbing experiences or conflicts in a positive way on a symbolic level. Leuner's technique for dealing with threatening figures that appear in the visualizations by having the patient imagine that he is making friends with them or feeding them is a good example of the way in which this may be done. By actively facing a threatening situation and working it through on a symbolic level, the patient learns to replace a neurotic way of feeling and relating with more mature and constructive modes. An old Irish tradition—according to which, if one sees a ghost and runs away from it, the ghost will conquer, but if one has the courage to walk toward the ghost and confront him directly, the ghost will disappear—expresses this truth more poetically.

It seems clear that the value of such methods does not depend on interpretation. The working through of conflicts on a symbolic level can definitely bring about growth regardless of whether the person is able to verbalize about or understand intellectually what has happened. On the other hand, once a person has lived something on the symbolic level, sound interpretation emerging from the person's own *experience* rather than

imposed on him from the outside can add to the value of the experience. An intellectual formulation, provided it is not an intellectualization and does not precede or substitute for emotional and intuitive insight, seems to consolidate and make more complete the process of understanding. It may possibly facilitate the transfer of learning from one situation to another and make behavior patterns more accessible to conscious direction through the use of the will and other active techniques. It is also important to help the patient relate what has happened in a mental imagery session to his attitudes and relationships in real life. On the other hand, there are mental imagery techniques, such as some of the symbolic identification methods to be discussed later, that do not require interpretation. The issue of interpretation versus non-interpretation so much debated among practitioners of mental imagery like the question of "direction" versus "spontaneity" seems to be really a matter of technology and, hence, of secondary importance to the more basic science of how and to what end the various techniques are used. The answer to this question and so many others in the field of psychotherapy would seem to lie partially in the personality of the therapist. If the therapist is relatively confident of his own understanding of what has happened and feels at ease using interpretation, then it is probably desirable to do so at the right time. Those therapists, however, who do not feel comfortable with interpretation or who find that it has a "drying-up" effect on the imagery of their patients are probably well advised to avoid it.

As was pointed out, the term "spontaneous" in reference to mental imagery procedures is relative, owing to the fact that there is always at least a minimal amount of structure in the situation. One very valuable method, though somewhat more structured, that the writer has developed and used extensively is the elicitation of "answers from the unconscious" through mental imagery (Crampton, 1965). In this procedure, the subject is instructed to concentrate on a particular question, seeking the answer in the form of a visual image that will appear on the mind-screen. It is a good technique to use in a session dealing with discussion of current problems because it provides a rapid means of contacting deeper levels while still maintaining the general context of dialogue. The question may emerge from the conversation—e.g. "What is the meaning of your headache now?"; "What does this dream symbol represent for you?"; "How do you act out what this symbol is expressing in your daily life?"; "What do you feel like when your husband treats you that way?"; "How could you handle this more effectively?," etc.—or the question may be of a more general nature—e.g. "Who am I?," "Where am I in my life now?," "What is my next step?," "What is my main problem at the present time?," etc. It may happen that instead of seeing an image, a subject will report an "answer" in the form of a word or phrase that he has seen written on the mind-screen or he may simply experience a feeling or an impression without an image. This material is also relevant and may be dealt with as such or used as a stepping-off point to obtain an image if this is desired (e.g. "Look for an image which will express this word or this feeling").

If the image produced is found to be obscure or not sufficiently deep, it is possible to use a step-by-step procedure whereby the subject is asked to visualize again on the meaning of his previous image, or further questions may be asked based on the preceding response. For example, a subject who visualized a shallow stream that did not run to the sea was asked why she stayed on the surface of life and in answer she saw a prickly pear, adding "It is a tropical delicacy, very sweet but soft and fragile inside. It could easily be hurt and destroyed if pressed too hard." This experience enabled the subject to see clearly for the first time—in spite of years of psychoanalysis—that she really was preventing herself from establishing the close relationships she longed for. In general, however, if the import of an image is not self-evident, it is possible to elucidate its meaning by the process of what the Jungians call "amplification" in working with dream symbols. In this process, one attempts to enlarge on the meaning of a symbol by detailed rational analysis of the nature and function of the object which the symbol represents. Amplification, in the writer's experience, is usually more fruitful than the free-association method, though it may be used in conjunction with a form of free association that remains centered around the symbol under consideration, returning always to the symbol itself rather than wandering off onto byroads of personal association. As an example of this process, a patient saw an image of himself carrying a plank with five lamps on it, connected by a cord to the East Indian shop where he had obtained it. It reminded him of a Jewish menorah or candlestick used for religious purposes, though the number

of lights was five rather than the traditional seven and the lights were table lamps rather than the candles. His association to five lamps was five working days. In amplifying the notion of table lamps, they were seen as something used in a living room where one might have a social gathering. In other words, they were lights used for a profane rather than a religious purpose. In amplifying the image of East Indians, he said they were associated with Oriental spirituality or mysticism and ideas of inner light, but they were also great talkers and tended to talk things to death rather than to act. This corresponded with his feeling of pride in carrying the lights and a wish to display what seemed to be a sort of trophy he had won. He was then able to see that this image expressed his own spiritual pride. He had been so concerned with talking about his experience, with displaying his "accomplishment," that he dispersed its energy, profaning a sacred experience in making it the object of "living room" conversation, a product of the five "working days," a personal achievement, rather than a gift from the Lord on the day of the Sabbath.

IDENTIFICATION TECHNIQUES

Another major class of mental imagery techniques of special importance in psychosynthesis are the symbolic identification techniques discussed by Gerard (Gerard, 1964, 1967a) and practiced in Gestalt therapy by Perls and others (1951). In these methods, the subject is asked to identify successively with the various parts (persons, animals, objects, natural phenomena) of a dream or fantasy production. It is assumed that all components of a mental imagery sequence usually represent, at least on some level, part of the person who has produced it. It is found that by identifying with the various components, projected aspects of oneself may be assimilated and greater empathy experienced for those persons on whom the tendencies have been projected. The technique of inner dialogue between the different figures or components in a dream or fantasy is thus of great value for integrating the warring factions within oneself so that the various drives, aims, and energies can function harmoniously.

In my experience—and this is a point that needs emphasis because it tends to be neglected by practitioners of mental imagery techniques—it is also important in many cases to have the subject not only visualize this inner dialogue but—in order to experience more completely the feelings involved—to *act out* the various roles in a psychodramatic process. I usually prefer the form of psychodrama used by Perls, in which the subject himself plays the various roles one after the other, to the classical type of psychodrama, in which the other roles are taken by another person. One can help a subject enter into the role of an inanimate object by asking him to describe how the object feels and to imagine what words it would say if it could talk. For example, a subject who dreamt that his way was blocked by a wall was asked to imagine that he, as the wall, could speak; he was thus able to experience the wall as part of himself with a will of its own that was actively opposing the other part of himself that wanted to pass. He acted out the role of the wall by bracing his feet and pushing against the therapist, and through this role-playing device, he really felt the strength of that part of himself that was opposing his own progress and learned to accept responsibility for it and gradually to overcome it.

In addition to these techniques of inner dialogue, symbolic identification may be used for other purposes. For example—by having the subjects identify with natural elements such as rock, river, cloud, sea, or sun—it is possible to expand the consciousness and induce a greater sense of participation in and oneness with the universe. This often helps people move from a consciousness limited by the bounds of the personal ego into the transpersonal dimension and toward a more cosmic awareness that may be a starting point for the spiritual psychosynthesis.

TRANSCENDENCE TECHNIQUES

Related to the above technique is the whole question of positive experience in psychotherapy or what has been called the "peak-oriented" approach (Maslow, 1962) though perhaps Gerard's term of "transcendence techniques" (Gerard, 1967b) is more appropriate. The principle involved is the transcendence and resolution of conflict on a higher level through an expansion of consciousness and an experience of higher feelings, such as

love, joy, and oneness with life. Such are the experiences sometimes obtained by Desoille's waking dream method in which, for example, there may be strong feelings of love and relatedness or a sensation of merging in light as the subject ascends in imaginary space. Such, again, are the experiences frequently reported under LSD and the other psychedelic drugs. The writer has developed a method described elsewhere (Crampton, 1968) that has proved of value in contacting this transpersonal level. In this procedure, the subject is asked to imagine his personality as though it were a series of concentric circles and to visualize the various layers in turn, starting with the outermost and proceeding towards the center or innermost core of his being. On the "outer" layers, a subject will usually encounter images expressing his conflicts and defenses on the personality level, whereas the "inner" layers contain the images of the supraconscious and the transpersonal self, typically ending with an experience of intense universal love or a merging in light or with the sun.

Other more direct techniques may be used as well, such as simply suggesting to the subject that he visualize himself standing on top of a mountain surrounded by light. In Assagioli's "Temple of Silence" exercise (Assagioli, 1965), the subject is asked to imagine himself slowly climbing a mountain on top of which is a temple of silence and in which he allows all the cells in his body, his heart, and his mind, to be filled with silence which he then brings down the mountain with him and radiates to the world around. In the "Dissolution of the Body" exercise (Assagioli, 1965), the subject imagines his body consumed in flames and may then experience a great sense of freedom and release with the awareness that his spiritual essence is something independent of the body. In a technique developed by Virel (Frétigny & Virel, 1968), the subject visualizes himself going through a primitive initiation rite in which he is buried in the ground in a standing position with only his head above the ground and left there overnight exposed to the dangers of the forest. The subject undergoes a "rebirth" experience and in the morning is received into the tribe as an adult member. Laura Huxley describes a number of "transcendence" techniques in her book, *You are not the target* (Huxley, 1965). For example, a subject may be asked to imagine the fundamental impersonal life energy of the universe as manifested in sun, air, water, earth, plants, and animals, and to feel this life-force flowing through his body and becoming part of it. He is then asked to relive a moment of personal creative energy when he felt full of vitality and happiness. These experiences are alternated with a relived experience of destructive personal energy so that the person learns to become a conscious and intelligent director of his own energies. Bindrim uses pleasurable sensory stimuli to evoke a reliving of past "peak" experiences (Bindrim, 1966). Shapiro describes a method in which feelings of joy, harmony, relaxation, openness, freedom, energy, love, ecstasy, wholeness, and so on are evoked by asking the subject to imagine what it would be like if he could live right now without any negative feelings such as anxiety, shame, fear, and guilt, and encouraging him to enter into this experience by using images to express it and by fully describing its nuances (Shapiro, 1966). Patients rediscover the immediacy and excitement of the small child's world in this way and can use this to explore new and more creative ways of relating to life. The "transcendence" techniques may also be used to de-condition or desensitize a patient to areas of disturbance by coupling the state of well-being with the reliving of an anxiety-producing situation, as in some forms of behavior therapy.

In addition to these "transcendence" techniques, which use primarily visual imagery, a variety of other mental imagery techniques draw on the other sensory modalities. These include the various relaxation procedures that, incidentally, considerably enhance the results obtained in the other transcendence techniques. They include also the gamut of sensory awareness methods that are so much in vogue in the United States today, as well as a variety of meditational approaches. It is frequently possible, by concentrating on a narrow range of sensory or kinesthetic sensations, to induce a state of expanded consciousness and feelings of peace, bliss, and union with the world. The body awareness techniques where the patient focuses on his muscular tensions and other bodily sensations are also very useful in conjunction with visual imagery procedures. For example, a patient described a feeling of tightness in his chest and was asked to visualize on what it was expressing. He saw himself with his finger in a dike holding back a mighty sea, after which he permitted himself to have a good cry. He also gained the awareness that if he was the one holding his finger in the dike, he could also voluntarily choose to release it.

In other words, he could choose to direct his life in other ways, which he started to do the following day when he elected to stop smoking—a feat he achieved with no difficulty at all after 30 years of heavy smoking. In this case, body awareness served to awaken a sense of the self as a center of will.

POTENTIAL APPLICATIONS

Finally, a word should be said about the vast range of potential applications for mental imagery procedures in the fields of education and "growth groups." The line between education and psychotherapy is a hard one to draw and perhaps, ideally speaking, no difference exists. If education were more generally concerned with its true function, that of "drawing out" the highest potentials of the human being (which include the emotional, interpersonal, sensory, physical, creative, intuitive, and "depth" or spiritual potentials as well as the traditional intellectual ones), it would have a great deal to learn from psychotherapy, and undoubtedly could do much to prevent psychic imbalance in later life as well as be more involving and fulfilling for the child.

Visualization techniques can be of great value in stimulating the intuition and in helping a child who thinks of himself as lacking in imagination and creativity to realize that he, too, has a poet and an artist within him. Many of the more structured imagery techniques could be adapted to the classroom, and it would not be impossible for a generation of children to learn again what Fromm has called "the forgotten language" of images and symbols (Fromm, 1951).

In addition, mental imagery techniques are being developed and used in industrial, research, and educational settings to stimulate the process of creative problem-solving. The method known as Synectics (Gordon, 1961) uses metaphors and analogies drawn from fields other than the problem at hand to open up new ways of looking at a problem. One of the steps in the procedure is a form of symbolic identification called "personal analogy" in which the participants imagine what it feels like to actually be the object under consideration—whether it be a wall of air, a telephone switchboard, or an elephant. This process of symbolic identification is potentially a valuable tool in teaching natural laws; for example, a child can grasp in a very immediate way the principles of Boyle's law by imagining what it would feel like to be a molecule in an enclosed space which was gradually compressed. This kind of learning is also more likely to produce the kind of insights that spark a creative breakthrough, as it is well-known that many scientists and inventors are led to their discoveries by imagery of this kind. Synectics can also be applied in the field of human relations or group therapy by asking people to identify with the kind of animal, machine, or natural object that other people remind them of. In addition, it may be desirable to learn more about the possibilities of using meditational techniques in education that have been explored by such pioneers as the Rudolph Steiner schools and Dessauer, in his book *Natural meditation* (Dessauer, 1965). And finally, mental imagery no doubt has numerous unexplored possibilities in the field of physical education. The teaching of relaxation could be initiated at an early age. A method for teaching posture described by Clark utilizes the visualization of a straight line running through the middle of the body from the center of the head to the lower end of the spine (Clark & Hawkes, 1963). Approaches of this kind suggest many potential applications of mental imagery in the fields of bio-psychosynthesis and preventive medicine.

I would like to end this paper, then, with an invitation to the practitioners of mental imagery to not only develop the many fruitful avenues within the field of psychotherapy, but also to extend their vision beyond to the broader fields of education, growth groups, and preventive mental health in which far greater numbers of people can be reached and where there is a possibility of eliminating mental disfunctioning at its roots.

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