

Comprehensive Cancer Care: Integrating Complementary & Alternative Therapies
Imagery and Cancer Treatment: An Experiential Workshop
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June 13, 1998

Dr. Achterberg: It's good to see so many of you here, and so many of my friends. Many of you have been doing this work at least as long as I have. I'm touched and I'm flattered. What I'd like to do for the next two hours is something quite different from what we've experienced in the conference so far. I'd like to give you the opportunity to move inward instead of outward, and to take information from that deep inner place of your own being, rather than the great information that we have been receiving. It can be a treat, and it can be a challenge. Each time we feel like we're being disturbed by sounds outside the room, we're going to take a deep breath, and we're going to let them pass. We're going to move deeper into the realms of our own being.

The structure for the morning will be that I'll lead you through one experiential exercise. Then I'd like to show you some healing slides which have become some of the greatest healing tools that I've ever used with cancer patients. We'll do another imagery exercise which is more related to health. Then I have a few more healing slides. Then we'll take some questions and comments, and maybe some answers. Maybe some answers. That would be good, too.

Let me see how many of you are using imagery in your practice. How many of you are using it as a healing tool for yourself, if you're comfortable in sharing that? My goodness. It's so good! This is so good. I'd like to start with a modified vision quest. In every culture since the beginning of time, when people were at the edge of being, on the brink of crisis, in the deep, dark abyss – when they were in the stage of saying, “Who am I? What is my purpose here? What is my life about? How do I take the next step into my own fullness?” Anybody who is not

in transition, who is not at this place, raise your hand. Good. We're all at the crevice, aren't we, of saying, "Who am I? What is my purpose and meaning? Am I doing what I need to be doing for myself, for my universe?"

A vision quest is an opportunity to open consciousness. In the old world, they said you opened yourself to the spirits and asked, "What symbolically should I embrace at this juncture in my life?" In the vision quest, one went through great duress, sometimes fasting from food and even water, and sometimes from sex for days and days and weeks on end. A special spot on the planet would be chosen, a sacred mountain, a swing on your back porch, a place by the fire, in the forest, in the ocean, any place that's sacred to you. As I'm talking, it might be helpful to begin to think about where you go to find healing. Where on the face of the earth, if you were truly in crisis, which you may be, what place would you go to? Perhaps you've never been to such a place. I've had a lot of patients say, "I've never been comfortable my entire life. I've had a miserable life." I say, "Make up a place, a fantasy place. Find a lagoon with gentle animals to help you float and flowers floating in the water. I don't care if you've ever been there. Find a place. There is a place."

Second, before we begin the exercise, you might be putting a framework around this event in your life, this journey, this epiphany, this place you find yourself. Although I'm teaching and not doing therapy with you this morning, these exercises are much more meaningful if you can use them for something of yourself. You can take notes if you want to for your patients, but I think it's more meaningful. What is this question that you have, this wondering about the mystery that we're living into?

Third, if you were to go on a vision quest, most of them last three days. This one's going to last 15 minutes. We can condense things. We're magic. We can make it work. If you were

to go, what would you take with you? To do serious inner work in a sacred place, what do you need? I'm going to lead you through this. My sense is that if I say fewer words instead of more, if I leave quiet here and there, then you're able to fill in the images in a way that makes sense to you. I will invite you to pack, in the beginning, to pack for your quest. I will remind you that you're going to spend a night in your imagination holding in consciousness that which is a question to you, that which asks for healing from you. In this night of the imagination, out of the darkness, some symbol, some image, some person, some sound may come forth. Just let it. At the end of the night, you'll come back to the place that you began your journey.

Before I start, let me define imagery in my context, and the imagination in my context. It is a midwife. It is a midwife that brings forth out of inner experience, out of the depths of your being to consciousness. It is not necessarily a picture in your head. I don't make pictures in my head, ever. My head is full of words. My head is full of sounds. My head is full of smells. Think of what your head is full of, and those are your images. I would never see a great mother bear jump out at me in these image sessions. I'd love to. It would scare me. But I form the image in my mind. It's a feeling state of the image, but no pictures. It's important to tell my patients that, to give them permission not to see pictures.

When we talk about body image after this particular experience, then I'll share with you another type of imagery that I think is very important. That's the imagery to feel consciousness moving into matter. That's what we'll experience. This is going to be good in two hours, isn't it? Get consciousness moved into matter, where it already lives anyway, folks. If nothing comes up in this imagery session, say, "All right, nothing's showing up. What I'm going to place there is ...". Then place the symbols that you choose to use. Okay? This is full permission.

If you don't want to do this you can balance your checkbook. It's true. The good thing about all these images is you can sit there and think about anything you want. Because we have so much noise outside the room, though, it would be good, if you decide not to go to these places, if we could all hold a noble silence so other people can. When I'm working with a group, in some groups some people go into what my husband calls deep meditation, which is accompanied by [snoring sound] and sometimes some leg twitching. If anybody goes into deep meditation, which of course you won't, then your neighbor may touch you gently. Those are the only rules. Let's honor one another's decisions to experience this or to not experience it. The other rule that we might give ourselves, or the other permission, is that all of that noise around us just reminds us that we live in a very noisy world, full of sound and smells. That is what it is.

We're going to turn the lights down. We're going to have a little bit of Deuter's music. I don't know if you know Deuter. He makes fabulous music. I think this one is called *Santa Fe*, which is where I live. As we begin we might find as comfortable a place in the chair as we can. If you get tired of doing this, you can also listen to the lecture next door. Now take a deep breath. All you need to do for the next few moments is move into that sweet place of silence inside. Let go of the troubles and concerns and thoughts that you brought in with you that you don't need for this little journey. Hold your attention on the in breath and the out breath.

As you move into the silence in your own being, allow any physical tension to release itself from you. You might want to begin allowing your mind to start at your feet, moving gently upward, letting any tightness call itself to you, any part of the body that needs attention. Moving up to your hips, the middle of your body, allowing any tightness to resolve itself. Arms, hands – all of this inner work seems to work better if body has reached its sweet place – relaxing the neck and the head, particularly around the eyes.

Now if you can, imagine yourself beginning to pack whatever you need to take with you for a night of questing, a night in a sacred place. Pack whatever you think you need. You may be feeling a sense of slight excitement, the excitement of reaching into the unknown. As you look over what you're gathering about you, take another look, and another look again. Are there things that are not essential to your inner work? If so, leave them home. Take what is truly essential.

When you feel like you have gathered to you those essential things, begin to travel in any way that makes sense to you to a place that feels holy, or nurturing, or safe. Remember, you can fly, you can move like the speed of light, but begin to go there now. Begin to settle in, because you may notice that the day is coming to an end, and the night of your envisioning is upon you. Make yourself comfortable for the inner journey. If you're outside, you notice that the shadows are beginning to lengthen. You hear the night sounds in the distance. The temperature may change slightly as the sun goes down, and the moon begins to come up.

Now remember the reason for your quest. What is it that you seek? What step do you wish to take? What needs to be made whole in your life? Where are you in this mysterious process, holding in consciousness this work you face? As the darkness prevails, allow any symbol, any image, any sound, any presence, to come forth on your behalf, taking your time with this. If nothing comes, gather something about you that you love, something that you bless. You may want to ask the symbol or the figure or the sound a question. Use all your senses, if you can, to experience this, your sense of touch, vision, hearing, smell. If you become uncomfortable, remember to come back to the in breath and the out breath.

The imaginary night in your holy place, in this world of the imagination, is moving towards its end, its closure. You sense the dawn. Hold with you if you can that symbol,

whatever it was, that place. Again you begin to notice the shift in temperature and in sound. You begin to go through the motions of leaving this place you've created, of gathering, of planning your return, first to the home in your imagination and then to this room, at a pace that feels comfortable for you. Traveling in any way that makes sense, come back home, back to the body home, paying attention again to the in breath and the out breath, attention again to the room, to the sights and sounds in this place. I'm going to give you some time to wiggle what needs to wiggle and stretch what's asking to be stretched. I'm going to count from one to three, and with each count you may wish to feel more refreshed and more alert. One, two, opening your eyes when you feel like it's time to do that, three.

If you'd like to you may want to take about a minute and stand and stretch and renew your circulation. Then we'll come back. I don't want to do a lot of talking and lecturing. I'd like to move on to the next exercise, but I want to plant some seeds with you. After we're finished with the experiential part we'll go back, if you want to, to these seeds. What's critical for me in this exercise are three things that I would ask myself, or I would ask my clients or patients. The first thing is, what did you take? My sense is that whatever you took is what you need most to nourish your inner life. Whatever you took. People take their journals. People take pictures of their children. They take their holy books. Some people take food and water because that is symbolic for nourishment and actual nourishment for them. Some people take a blanket. Some people take nothing. They go into this experience like Inanna did into the underworld, naked and bowed low. What did you take? What didn't you take?

With this overall question, let me ask you, as I would myself, or my clients or patients, when you went back and made the second pass at what you were taking for your inner work, did you choose to leave off something? Did you say, "You know, I really don't need that?" As we

go through the initiation process – and I’m here to tell you, mid-life is the initiation process. They didn’t quite warn you about this. Part of it is the stripping away of what is nonessential. The one great gift that I’ve had, many great gifts in working with persons diagnosed with cancer, is that all that is nonessential, all the dross is burned away. I should hope so much for myself. All the dross is burned away. Were you burning away dross?

The second umbrella of questions I would ask myself or my clients is, where do you go? Where do you go for your holy sustenance? This to me is so critical. With a diagnosis of cancer, the fear that I see breaks my heart, and it has done so for 25 years. What I see is that it is often the first time we ask ourselves, “Where are my holy places? What do I do now?” I’m here to tell you no cancer grows so fast that you can’t first go to a holy place and spend a night. That’s the truth. Or maybe two nights. Or maybe many more. Where do you go, in your imagination or in your life? Where do you go in this world, in this place, to find nurturing and visions?

The third question is, what, if anything, came forth out of these inner realms? Who or what, if anything, came forth? Whatever it was, it came from the creative aspect of your being, and it is for you the truth. If it was a rooster, and it came from you, I think that rooster had something to say. A lot of us censor these fabulous symbols and images. I used to censor the raccoon that would come talk to me all the time in my imagination. I said, “Who would want a power animal that’s a raccoon?” Somebody took me aside and said, “Do you know how smart they are? They can get into and out of anything.” Think about the qualities of whatever showed up – sounds, sights. Just think about them for a moment, if they had a message. Let’s go back to the rooster. I’ve never used that example before in my entire life. Did anybody have a rooster in this room? That’s a relief. It’s just coming from me. If you had a rooster, the rooster has a

message, doesn't it? It's what? Wake up! That's a good one, Jeanne. I'll have to remember that one. That would be the therapeutic context.

It's so old. When we look at the cave paintings in ancient France, what we see are probably people in darkness, coming forth with their images. When we look at the visionary art of living traditions, people are coming forth with their images in these vision quests. If you can hold those ideas, and if it's okay with you, I'd like to take another journey, but into the body this time.

What we're going to start with are a set of what I consider the most sacred slides that have ever been created in terms of healing. As I begin to work with people who are in health crisis, these kinds of visual images are some of the first things that I show them before we start talking about imagery and healing. Bernie, I just loved what you said. It was such an entree for all of this. If people could see how sacred and how beautiful and how magic the body is, we would treat ourselves and one another in very different ways. Walt Whitman said, "If the soul does not live in the body, then where else could it possibly live?" He was singing the body electric, the body victorious, the body glorious. These slides are very much singing the body electric and glorious.

I do think it's important for people, if they are working on a body healing, not necessarily to know the specific biology, but to know the mystery, and to appreciate the miracle that it is. This is a painting that was done, I think, in the 17th century. These kinds of images actually come to many people in their dreams and visions, that indeed that is what the body probably looks like. It's full of showers and sparks of chemicals and electricity, all of that being held together by something invisible we might call consciousness, or God, or whatever we use for the invisible realm. What I invite you to do, as I invite other people that I've worked with, is to

allow your own consciousness, if you can, to move into the aspect of the body that we have on the slide.

I promised that I would talk about a different kind of imagery, the kind of imagery that I see people using in their healing. That is the ability to feel consciousness, like heavy grains of sand, move into places in the heart, places in the liver, places in the tumor. Consciousness is already there, so it's a matter of opening up these pathways again, of remembering what the consciousness in body feels like that is part of the healing process. This I truly believe. This is the last slide we'll have that looks out into the world. We're not doing much outer looking this morning.

We're going to start with the very beginning of the intelligence of conception. The intelligence of conception. It's important for me always to remind people that they are a miracle and a unique miracle. The odds of the sperm that came and united with the ovum, the odds are astronomical against that happening, for that particular sperm and that particular ovum. Nothing else could have created it except an intelligence that brought this information together. Whatever we think of ourselves, whatever we lack in consciousness, what we feel we lack in presence, is actually an unrecognized miracle, and it begins here. It is perfect.

I'm planting another seed. Let's try to move out of the pill fairy consciousness. All right? Remember the hope that there would be, for most of us, who are a little bit earlier than baby boomers – we absolutely knew we would never die, because there would be cures found for everything. I'm not so sure about that anymore, but as we move past this miracle of life, what we see forming are the seeds, the essence of healing from every major condition. Fallopian tube, ripened ovum, again perfection. This is one of my favorite slides in the whole universe about

perfection. This is a fertilized ovum that has begun a gentle gyration. It's the first dance of life. It actually moves. It actually begins to dance.

Many slides of the immune system are available. Thank God they're in textbooks for children and teenagers, because they begin to see the beauty of living tissue. Remember *Gray's Anatomy*, which most of us grew up on? No wonder we didn't really understand the body. This is captured inside of a uterus. Down at the bottom there you see the beginning of the doubling of the cells. We've just gone through the miracle of the first few moments of life. That's each one of us, captured in an intelligence beyond speaking. As we go through the rest of these slides, these are the tissues that were created. As we move towards the end of the slides, we'll see the incredible defense system that guards us most of the time against cancer and bacteria and viruses.

This is a neuron snaking its way across muscles. If you're having a tight feeling in your neck, or around your back, or in your hips, right now, imagine those muscles relaxing. Imagine them moving away from grasping onto those neurons. The neuron is an amazing messenger, carrying information to and fro. If you can imagine the miracle, this is a single red blood cell on a cut finger. Immediately, within a second, a fibrous cocoon begins to form around it to keep you from bleeding to death – a miracle of healing. Think of this, if you're about to go into surgery. Think of this working appropriately. There are interesting studies in dentistry. For 25 years they've known that if they tell people to allow blood to clot it will clot faster. Six studies have been done with hemophiliacs, telling them that if they can imagine this happening, they'll need less factor replacement, and significantly they need less. Consciousness can move into the realm of blood. Consciousness can be present and affect the clotting process. This can be very important for many of you who are going through treatment.

Here's a little comic relief. This is also healing. One of the great healing things I find about my beloved husband and lover of 23 years now, is that I love his smells. I carry one of his old tee shirts with me when I travel. This is what makes the smell so unique. This is a pore in an armpit. Siblings can identify tee shirts from their other siblings that have been stored away for a year. Babies identify their mothers. We all identify each other with something ineffable called this chemical smell. It is healing, isn't it? These are the bacteria in an armpit that make our smell print so unique.

Place consciousness, if you can, in your gallbladder. This is the inside of a gallbladder. Place consciousness, if you can, in your cartilage, the tissue around your joints, your knees, your elbows, feeling some gratitude that it does heal. They used to tell us, "If the cartilage is gone, forget it." There are all sorts of ways now to stimulate cartilage growth. Cartilage used to be considered fatalistic, cartilage problems. It's not any longer. Imagine, if you can, this fabulous, spongy, beautiful tissue that was created out of the perfection of the coming together of the life force that is you. Imagine this tissue, capable of healing, regenerating in some way.

Put your mind, if you can, into a bone. Bones aren't dead. We all think bones look like chicken bones, because those are the only bones we ever see, usually. Bones are full of life. They're full of energy. They're highly metabolic. They repair themselves. We know from studies that people who pay attention to old, unhealed broken bones, who pay attention to it, who do meditation, do biofeedback, can heal those bones significantly faster. Those studies are available. Imagine this highly metabolic tissue that you have, capable of healing. For cancer patients, with bony metastasis, or who have had other types of fractures, imagine that those bones are more capable of healing if you sit quietly for 20 minutes a day and pay attention to them, send your loving energy to them.

Imagine the mitral valve. People who dissect the human body say this is the most beautiful structure in the whole body. It's like a sail unfurled in the wind. If I ask you to put your mind in your heart – nice metaphor, put your mind in your heart – most of us can do that. Feel your heart beat. Feel its life. Feel it if you can. You can also put your mind in your fat. This is a slide that I use for people who are trying to lose weight. Part of the imagery is to imagine the fat shrinking out of the fat cells. Imagine saying to your body, “Take in only what you need. Take in only and store only that fat that you need.” The days of hibernation are probably over. We don't need all that fat to cushion us from life.

This is another imagery of healing that has been important, another fairly frivolous one that's also a miracle. Run your tongue around your mouth. What you're feeling are these taste buds. Who could have thought to have structured these things so well? Think of the pleasures they bring, almost as much pleasure as that pore in the armpit. Imagine, if you can, this pituitary gland. Take your consciousness and move it up inside of your mouth, up into your brain, and see if you can sense this master gland that modulates so many of the hormones in your body. Who could have thought of these things?

Now imagine, if you can, the sensation of standing at the base of your spine and looking down. This is what you feel, and this is what you see. If you're feeling tension back there, allow the muscles to relax. Allow this gentle flowing of information. It may want to be straightened a little bit. It may want to move into a different position. Just pay a little attention to it. This part of our body gets neglected. Most of us end up with some very bizarre postures. We think we need duct tape in order to stand up correctly.

Put your mind in your heart again. This is the interior of your heart. Just for a moment allow attention to be back in your heart. This will be a real challenge for you. Gently move your

head back and forth, and imagine in the inner ear there are some crystal structures that tell you where you are in space. How important this is, metaphorically, knowledge of where we are in space? How do I contend with the forces of gravity? How do I stand up? How do I sit down? What a miraculous structure. Finally, if ancient peoples had ever seen this, the pineal gland, they would certainly have called it the home of the soul, which they did. I can only sense in some way that they knew this beautiful structure was pacing our body clocks, and many other things.

Now let us take a voyage into the immune system. For those of you who are working with cancer in one way or another, I want you to imagine that these particular cells are present in you in the billions. It's not an act of imagination, it's truth. These are macrophages. They're the clean-up campaign after you've had any kind of treatment, after you've had any kind of cellular damage. These are the active participants. Imagine those green things as bacteria, or viruses, or cancer cells. Imagine that within a blink of an eye, the macrophage, or the white blood cell, comes over and completely absorbs the cancer cells, the dead and dying cells you no longer need. I showed this to medical students about 10 years ago and they applauded. What a marvelous defense for you.

This is another macrophage inside of lung tissue. It's so clever. Macrophages are so clever that if what you have is indigestible, they surround it like a wagon train and hold it from doing you harm. They put it in the refrigerator, so to speak, wrapped in saran wrap. Such beauty and such mystery. This is another white blood cell digesting an old, dead, dying red blood cell that you no longer need. Can you imagine this happening billions of times a day in your body? It does. Most of the current thinking of cancer, as many of you know, is that it's a mutual process between your defense system and the growth of the cancer cells. These

particular cells that you're looking at are always on the prowl for single cancer cells, which may be present frequently.

I think those are T cells, and that's a cancer cell. As I will show you as I go through this, they are totally destructible. This is a macrophage like a cowboy wrapping its tentacles around viruses and cancer cells and bacteria. It takes those viruses and brings them into its body proper, and dissolves them, or carries them out, as Bernie's Quaker did. Another macrophage is sending its false foot, called a pseudopod, out towards a cancer cell, placing its little paw over it. This is another type of white blood cell. I love these. These are the most numerous in your body. They're very important for your first line of defense. They're called neutrophils.

This one here on my left is a neutrophil that has not been called into action. These are from an electron microscope, incidentally. On the right it has been called into action. It develops feet. Can you see its foot? It's true. It begins to crawl and slither down the blood vessel walls. Like Velcro it hangs on to the blood vessel walls. Then there is a message. The blood vessel walls open up, and it slithers its little foot right through and moves towards your tissue where you need help.

Up at the top there are two cancer cells. That little guy is a killer T cell. It punctures the cancer cells. They develop blisters, peel like an orange, and explode. Many of you have seen these pictures in your own training. I cannot tell you how important they are. You do not need to know the details, nor do patients need to know the details, but just that there is such an honorable and beautiful defense. More progression from the electron microscope, swallowing it up. This is a B cell. B cells float around until they're called to action. You get B cells when you get vaccinations and inoculations. When the danger is present they begin to clone themselves with the specific intelligence to protect you.

Notice I'm avoiding words like kill. The fact is that they do go after cells, and the cells are gone. You can use whatever word you want to for that. I've learned that if I make this too vicious and gory, it is unacceptable. I don't think it's vicious and gory. I think it's beautiful. This is a bacteria that has just been approached and infiltrated by a white blood cell. It's exploding. This is an actual bacteria, under electron scanning microscope. Look at it. Imagine, if you can, this happening now, presently, in your body – cancer cells and viruses and bacteria exploding. Some of my patients use this imagery of feeling these mini-explosions in their body, and saying, “Thank you. Thank you. That felt good.” It's a cleansing process. Another macrophage, and those are yeast cells. It's gobbling up yeast, which with many diseases can become an overriding, opportunistic infection.

This is my favorite cancer picture. I have patients who have enlarged this and have it hanging on their wall. It's from *National Geographic*, 1986. The white stuff is the cytoplasm left from a cancer cell. The blue thing is a killer T cell ready to go on for action. It's an actual picture of a cancer cell robbed of any of its ability to take your life. Crumbling. If you touched it, it would crumble. I'm giving you more imagery. Imagine the cancer cells exploding as you can, and as the life is removed from them they actually crumble. Finally, as we finish this series, some more pictures, some more ideas for your inner body journey. Imagine, if you can, that the hormones, the transmitters in your body, the chemicals in your body could actually be seen in their crystal form, which these are. It might help you to imagine these.

This is insulin. This is a very important slide for people with diabetes, especially when they've been on insulin too long and insulin itself is becoming a problem, and if they have any ability to produce their own insulin. Imagine insulin. Imagine what this does. It ushers fuel into your cells. See it as a vehicle. Imagine, if you can, your own cortisone. This is what it looks

like in its crystal form. Somebody said something yesterday about the microcosm and the macrocosm – that which is inside representing that which is outside, being the same. As we finish these, begin to think about how these minute cellular particles resemble the greater issue.

This is what I think cortisone would look like. What do you think this is? It's adrenaline. Of course. Energy, fight or flight. Any guesses? If you were going to create a hormone that looked like what it was supposed to do, it would be this. It's testosterone. More testosterone. The stuff's gorgeous, isn't it? What do you think? Estrogen, of course. These things are all sacred, aren't they? This is progesterone. With that, are you ready to use some of that and take it into a body journey, or do we need a little stretch first? Let's just stand at our seats. After we do this other exercise, we'll take a little break. I want you to hold this imagery, if you can, as we go through the body.

This next journey will take about 20 minutes. Then we'll turn the lights on and see what questions and concerns you have. Let me give you some outlines of this so you'll have a sense of the method in my madness. This is going to resemble what I call Imagery 101. It has been tested for about 20 years. We've got all sorts of studies on it, showing what it does to you physiologically. It has been tested with cancer patients and people with diabetes and rheumatoid arthritis. Most all of that stuff is published in my books.

All of these imagery exercises needed to follow a pattern, because we were monitoring the physiology of the people we were working with. The pattern that they all follow, which will be truncated just a little bit today, is that they needed to last between 20 and 25 minutes. Any shorter than that and people didn't seem to be able to benefit. Any longer than that and they didn't work. How do we know? We were monitoring all sorts of things – temperature, muscle tension, all sorts of responses. The other part of this formula is that during the first six to ten

minutes is a guided relaxation that is within your belief system. Something you can do to go into the deep, silent place. I've always liked what we call modified autogenics, which is to start at the feet or the head and simply relax the muscles. Even though I lived in California for 12 years, I had to keep the woo-woo language out of what I did, or I lost ground. I stay pretty close to the body language. Six to ten minutes of body relaxation.

The next part of the imagery, which goes on up until the last minute or two of the session, will be invoking three things. What is the nature of your problem, your crisis? Back in the old days, before we knew any better, we'd do workshops and have everybody imagine that they had cancer, the therapists. Wasn't that cool? You learn a little as you go on. I don't want you to do that. If you had surgery and there's no reason for you to believe that you have cancer or any other disease, for crying out loud, don't recreate it. What you can create are the images of this fabulous defense that you just saw, that works all of the time, cleansing, surveying, taking care of stray cancer cells, bacteria and virus. You don't need to recreate a solid tumor. Why bother?

If you're healthy, go ahead and practice this. Most of us have a little something, don't we? A little gum disease, a little ache and pain here and there, just a little something. If you have nothing, congratulations, you should be leading the workshop. Let me know, afterwards. So you may want to work on that little something. When we're doing work on a broader level, we'll say that little something may be a relationship, that little something that is a dis-ease may be a job. For purposes of this exercise, it's a little easier to think of a "body" something, just to have the experience of it. If you'd rather not, you'd rather think of that disastrous situation you left at work, go ahead and do it. We think of the nature of the problem, number one. I'll walk you through this.

Next is the nature of the inner healing resources. It can be white blood cells, if it's cancer. It can be anything. It can be any of those slides you saw that the tissue is known to regenerate and heal. Go ahead and imagine that happening. The third thing is, imagine any treatments, anything that you're taking from outside yourself, any medicine. Medicine means that which helps and heals. Your medicines might be your vitamin C. Your medicines might be the herbs you're taking. Your medicines can be anything that you take from the outer world to the inner world. Don't worry too much about this. Do I take prayer from outer world or inner world? I don't care. I think it comes both places. As I'm talking and giving you this information, if you want to do the exercise, you'll be thinking, "What is the nature of what I want to make whole today, or to heal? What is the nature of my inner healing resources? What is the nature of my medicine? What is the nature of my world that I use to heal me?"

We'll follow that format, and then we'll come back. I'm probably not going to do this as long, because you're not going to be very comfortable for that length of time, but I will keep those segments in it. As you did before, you may want to wiggle around a little bit until you find your comfort zone in those chairs, giving yourself permission as before to allow any troubling thoughts or sounds, just acknowledge them and let them go. Generally let the music just wash over you. It's a way to remind yourself to stay in meditation. This is an active meditation. Sometimes the music allows you to feel fairly alert. This is not a deep trance.

Pay attention to your in breath and your out breath. You may notice, or you may not, tightness in your chest. Feel any tightness melt away. Remember to cherish the in breath and the out breath. Allow a sense of relaxation, if you can, moving up the legs, both the right and the left leg, letting go. As you move into the core of your being, you might wish to remember some of the exquisite images, simply paying attention to the heart, moving mind wherever you wish,

the structure of the bone, cartilage. As you do this, take an in breath and an out breath, and relax more and more, allowing the relaxation, the tension of the mind to move upward still into your throat and neck, allowing a sense of softness, releasing tension in the shoulders and arms and hands. We hold a lot of tension in our face, the mask that we wear. Since no one can see you, you can let your face move in its natural soft direction. You might want to allow your attention to move to any place that still seems painful or needing attention in some way.

Now using the in breath and the out breath, if you can, imagine the clouds in your mind being swept away, the murkiness that comes from having too many thoughts of the same kind. Allow it to flow away if you can, achieving as much clarity as you can for right now. Imagine that there is a searchlight, glowing from your brain, the brain where most people believe the mind lives. Imagine this searchlight can look into every place in the past and the future and the present, every shadow, every dark corner. As you breathe the in breath and the out breath, the searchlight grows stronger. With this searchlight, take a look at the problem – no judgment, no blame, simply shine it on the problem. In breath and out breath, it grows brighter. Using all of your senses, experience this problem – no blame, no judgment, simply know it. It is what it is. Experience its sound, texture, smell, movement, if any. If you need to look around behind it into the dark places within it, shine that light clear to its core. What is in the core of this problem? It may be biological, but it may be something else.

Bring the searchlight now to bear on the nature of your inner healing resources. See them come into the light. Look at their nature. Feel their nature. What is it that heals you and loves you, that comes from deep within you? If nothing comes, create something in this light. Now bring into this pattern, this stage of your inner world, any medicine that you are giving yourself. What is it that you bring into your life to heal your life? As you breathe the in breath

and the out breath, imagine the power of these inner resources and these medicines, invigorate them with the in breath and the out breath. Know that they're there. Breathe the breath of life into these elements of your healing.

As we bring this imagery to its final stage, imagine yourself as you wish to be, past the crisis, remembering that we're often strongest in our broken places. Feel the strength returning, remembering wholeness, remembering the divine sense of being pain-free – physically, emotionally, spiritually. Just for a moment, and a moment more, and as long as you can, hold this feeling of being past this crisis.

As you come out of the session of inner work, return to the in breath and the out breath, the rise and fall of your chest, the sensation of being in these chairs in this room at this time. As you did before, wiggle what needs to wiggle, and stretch what needs to stretch. As you come back into this room and this place, to ground the imagery in images, I'd like to show you five more healing slides.

If you ever have an opportunity to see these in person, in real life, it's an incredible work of art by Alex Grey. They're called *The Sacred Mirrors*. Alex is at New York University in the Department of Medical Anatomy there. He, like Walt Whitman, said the soul lives in the body. The body has to be the vehicle for the soul. If that's true, then I need to understand the beauty of the body. So as we go through these, we move from the most dense of who we are, to the most elevated of who we are in Alex Grey's images. He starts with the chemistry of the body. These are all life-size, so if you walk down the exhibit you're looking into the eyes of men and women your own size. The exhibit is in storage right now, but the book is *Sacred Mirrors*. I'll give you all these resources after I show them to you.

This is the basic chemistry. As you walk down, you see the next most dense level. You see the bone, the bony structure. All of this is miraculous. In the next figure, you see the vascular system. This is the electrical system essentially, the system of nerves. Then he begins to add on tissue and organs. As I go through these I like to think that all of these elements that you see – the carbon in our bones was once part of the stars, and the fluids in our bodies were once part of the ocean. They begin to remind me of the interconnectedness of all life, not only the interconnectedness of mind, body and spirit, but the fact that elementally we're connected with everything else, organic and inorganic. This mystery of the coming together that created our lives came out of these elements.

Alex, as well as most spiritual traditions in the world, says there is something that has not yet been dissected in the human body. There are various names for these energy centers, chakras. In some healing traditions there are five chakras, in some there are seven, in some there are nine. They're very important in most forms of non-allopathic medicine – Ayurvedic medicine, traditional Chinese medicine, Tibetan medicine. These energy centers represent not only energy within the body, but in Alex's view, in his visions and the visions of healing traditions, what is energetic, resonant within each body extends beyond that body. If you and I are in proximity, the energy from each one of your shining wheels can interact with the energy of each one of my shining wheels. We are the only culture left on the face of the earth probably that has not acknowledged these energy centers. Just think, just maybe there's some truth to this. What would that mean? What would that mean for healing, if we're all interconnected at this invisible level?

Finally, Alex and most major spiritual and healing traditions say that all of this dense matter and all of what you have just seen is really just the window dressing for the life force. If

you could sense it at the very deepest level of your being, this is what life looks like. I want to share that with you, because in some way this is a healing phenomenon. I am not dense matter that cannot be interpenetrated by my own consciousness, much less by the presence of other people in my environment. Maybe, just maybe, these alternative traditions have a glimpse of the truth. We are really molecules of dancing light.

Let's turn the lights up, speaking of molecules of dancing light. Thank you for honoring one another's space in this. We have another 20 minutes. I know some of you have questions, and some of you feel like you need to get up. If you feel like you don't have questions, you have my permission to go on to the next stage of your conferencing. Those of you who would like to ask questions or address issues, please feel free to stay with me for another 20 minutes or so. We have a microphone in the center.

The music that I used was Deuter, and that particular piece is called *The Land of Enchantment*. Deuter is a German musician who lives in the United States. Most of it is available at your metaphysical bookstores. The other one that I turned off was called *Crystal Piano*, which is a Canadian piece.

Many of the slides come from the National Geographic, June 1988. That is still available. I buy it in boxes. It's \$2.95 a copy. It's something that you can give to your patients. They take home and they frame those pictures. Most of the immune and some of the autoimmune slides are in that particular issue. National Geographic is now available on CD-ROM. The pictures aren't as good as the real thing.

Participant: People ought to know that *The Sacred Mirrors* can be bought as a book, and that Alex Grey has an exhibit now at the Visionary Art Museum in Baltimore. He's got a couple

of beautiful paintings up there now, and a wonderful sculpture, a whole wall sculpture of hearts going out into the world. It's just beautiful.

The other thing I wanted to say is I'm very interested in the use of entheogens or psychedelics for the use of healing. I am presently the medical director of an institute in Baltimore called the Orenda Institute. I'm going to show you this because I have a few of these. We have permission from the Food and Drug Administration to give LSD to people who have problems with cancer or problems of addiction. We have a protocol in front of the Food and Drug Administration right now to work with people who have cancer. If anybody is interested, please come talk to me. My name is Donna Dryer. It's called the Orenda Institute. Orenda is a word in a lot of Native American traditions that means the vision that we are trying to get to, the essence. It's what we were doing here today. I loved the fact that we were doing that today.

Dr. Achterberg: Plant medicines obviously were used in most cultures for this kind of work. Whatever problems we have in our culture we have to acknowledge, but they were certainly the basis for the ancient work.

Participant: Some people have just asked me for my address. I'll give it to you. Again my last name is Dryer. The name of the Institute is Orenda. The address is 2403 Talbot Road, Baltimore, MD 21216. The phone number is (410) 664-2454.

Dr. Achterberg: Thank you, Donna. That's good information.

Participant: When you work with your cancer patients, do you do this whole slide presentation, or do you pick things specific by cancer? Would you pick something different for breast cancer and show different...?

Dr. Achterberg: Yes and yes. A lot of our work now is done in teaching groups, where there are a variety of diseases. I would probably, if I were teaching in a group, use the whole thing. But normally I sit with these books in my lap. They're priceless books, and we'll go through them and copy the text and whatever. The answer is yes, if I'm working in a group, I would probably show the whole series. If I was working just with individuals, then I usually show whatever is specific for them.

Participant: How often do you recommend that your patients perform these visualizations, and for how long?

Dr. Achterberg: Let me tell you what the research shows, and again, it's on hundreds and hundreds of people. That is that the more often they use them, the more often they accomplish what they are trying to do with them. This stuff is dynamite, incidentally, for pre-anticipatory nausea for chemotherapy and things like that. We set a realistic goal, and then depending on how sick they are, or how hard they see the goal to achieve, they decide to do it at least once a day and maybe more. People who are undergoing active treatment will listen to my tapes over and over and over again. I make these tapes for them. There's a stress management aspect to them also. The answer is the more often that they use it, the more likely they are to achieve whatever goals they have set with it.

Participant: Do you have recorded tapes, or are you familiar with others that you would recommend?

Dr. Achterberg: I do have them, and they are sold by New Era Media in San Francisco. It's an 800 number that I don't have in my head. Incidentally, you can all contact me through the *Journal of Alternative Therapies*. I'm there constantly. They'll put your calls through to me. If you have a copy of the *Journal*, you can always ask me those questions. If you forget that I said New Era Media, call the *Journal* and tell them you need that information. I'll get right back with you.

Participant: I'm interested in the energy work of Wilhelm Reich and particularly his book, *The Cancer Biopathy*. I was wondering if he had any influence on your work, and if you know if any people in the country are using his work today.

Dr. Achterberg: My husband, Frank Lawlis. It's had influence like that on my work. The more I understand about what Reich was saying, the more I think he was closer to the truth than anybody actually knew at that time. He was talking about subtle bodies. He was talking about energy that emanated from some other place. What did he do, die in jail?

Participant: Yes. He was prosecuted as a cancer fraud, even though in his book, *The Cancer Biopathy*, he says in the introduction that he has not found a cure for cancer. He thought the only real answer to cancer was prevention. All the patients in the book die. It's unlikely

someone would be promoting a cure through a book in which all the patients die. But he was prosecuted by the FDA. He was investigated for about 10 years. He was put in prison, and he died in prison. The U.S. Government by federal court order burned his books, among them *The Cancer Biopathy*.

It's 50 years later now, almost, and it seems an appropriate time for people at a setting like this to at least be aware of what he did and his pioneering work. The books are available today. You can get them through the Reich Museum which is up in Maine. I'm just always curious to see what influence he had on any of the people such as yourself who are leaders in our era. Thanks.

Dr. Achterberg: There's a great movement in Germany now that's supporting him. My husband had an orgone box when I first met him. I thought it was a coffin. These things will come back around. He built an orgone box, which was to do a lot of healing things.

Participant: I have a problem. I do imagery with a lot of cancer patients, some of whom have other diagnoses, such as bipolar disorders, or a history of psychotic depression. People feel very unsafe and become very anxious, so I've abandoned using imagery with these people. I feel some replacement needs to be there. I'm just not sure what it is.

Dr. Achterberg: It's interesting that this work really came out of work with cancer. To date, there's not been a lot of research and not a lot of clinical work with particularly psychotic people. I think it's contraindicated, especially the visual imagery. Biofeedback, which is a body imagery, works just fine, keeping it in the realm of kinesthesia. But the visual component is very

disorienting. I could be wrong. It's probably me. I probably don't know how to do it with people like that. To this date I've not been real successful.

Participant: That's how I feel. It must be me, because there has to be another way to do this.

Dr. Achterberg: I think we're on to something.

Participant: I was at UC Santa Cruz a week ago, listening to Terence McKenna, Rupert Sheldrake, and Ralph Abraham for an entire day. It was exciting. They were talking about evolutionary mind. They brought up consciousness. It took up most of the day, speaking of non-biological and biological forms of consciousness on a macroscopic level. I'd like to hear the feminine viewpoint of that, and specifically on the micro level. They spoke – actually there was discussion, we all spoke – about telepathy, forms of consciousness. Does imagery invoke telepathy with the cells that are not wanting to really communicate with us, that are taking over our bodies, in terms of cancer cells? I wanted you to speak to that.

Dr. Achterberg: First of all, this is very much at the heart of my work right now. I'm writing a book on relationship as spiritual practice. I'm beginning to see that there are all sorts – you can use the word telepathy, you can use any word, but I think there is a deep communication among human beings that may resemble the same telepathic communication that we have with our cellular structures. That's a way to look at it. It may be resonance. I don't know what telepathy is. It may be resonance. It may be some kind of energetic that we haven't identified.

There are similarities. I would like to take a lot of time to think about the feminine aspects of the micro-consciousness. That's a juicy topic for me. Thank you.