

This card—Imagery Intro—is Number 4 in a series of “Diversions for You and Your Friends” by Arlene Harder, MA, MFT, Support4Change Blog.

Being sick or having a major problem in your life is a pain in the neck. This is because, in large part, any situation that negatively impacts your life forces you to think about *it*, rather than more pleasant things. That is why this card is designed to **take your mind off your troubles**, at least for a while. It is also a way you can **share this diversion with family and friends who need a boost today.**



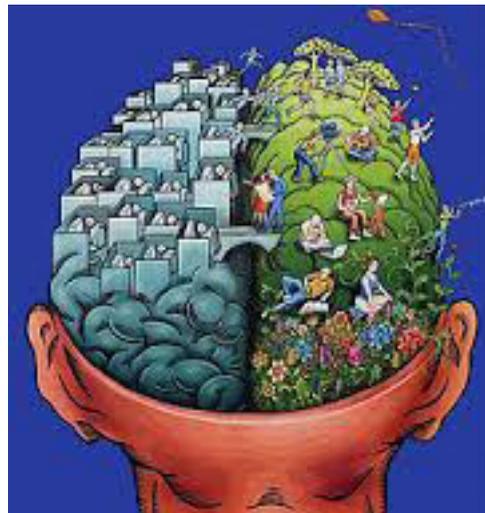
When I saw clients who had stress, anxiety and physical problems, I would introduce them to imagery and meditation. These two techniques helped them discover how to disconnect from the chattering of their minds . . . find the courage to forgive themselves and others . . . embrace qualities of the human spirit . . . uncover symbols of strength and courage . . . and create harmony and wholeness in their lives.

Eventually, I created an e-book called *Open Up the Right Side of Your Brain*. This was an introduction to a manual I planned to write for therapists and life coaches called *Imagery and Symbols: the Glue of Habit and the Lubricant of Change*. Unfortunately, I had some physical difficulties that prevented me from publishing that book, but I was left with a great deal of useful material I now want to share with you in these diversion cards.

Let me begin by telling you about the picture on the front of this card, which was also on the cover of the e-book. It was taken on a lake in Maine by my brother, who is an excellent amateur photographer. (Incidentally, a large copy of this picture hangs in my bedroom and my day begins with its calming scene.)

Much like fog that gradually clears can reveal a hidden forest, imagery and meditation are techniques that can reveal overlooked attributes of the right side of your brain,

However, before I send you exercises that will encourage you to call upon your *whole brain* to discover qualities you may not have known you possess, I want to share some comments by Daniel Pink, who is one of the world's leading business thinkers and the author of five best-selling books about work, management, and behavioral science.



Incidentally, I am not sure if he drew this graphic of two sides of the brain or had someone draw it for him, but it demonstrates the emphasis that has been placed on the left side of the brain, to the detriment of the right:

Until recently, the abilities that led to success in school, work, and business were characteristic of the left hemisphere. They were the sorts of linear, logical, analytical talents measured by SATs and deployed by CPAs. Today, those capabilities are still necessary. But they're no longer sufficient. In a world upended by outsourcing, deluged with data, and choked with choices, the abilities that matter most are now closer in spirit to the specialties of the right hemisphere - artistry, empathy, seeing the big picture, and pursuing the transcendent.

. . . The Information Age we all prepared for is ending. Rising in its place is what I call the Conceptual Age, an era in which mastery of abilities that we've often overlooked and undervalued marks the fault line between who gets ahead and who falls behind.

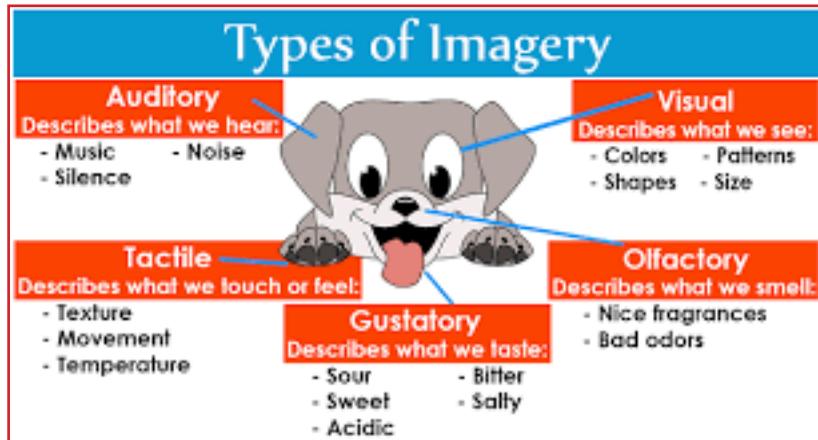
. . . To flourish in this age, we'll need to supplement our well-developed high tech abilities with aptitudes that are "high concept" and "high touch." High concept involves the ability to create artistic and emotional beauty, to detect patterns and opportunities, to craft a satisfying narrative, and to come up with inventions the world didn't know it was missing. High touch involves the capacity to empathize, to understand the subtleties of human interaction, to find joy in one's self and to elicit it in others, and to stretch beyond the quotidian in pursuit of purpose and meaning.

I think this is all I ought to write for today about this topic. Don't want to overwhelm you.

In other diversion cards I will share with you some of the ways you can discover qualities and strengths that may have been

hidden from your awareness—and that can greatly benefit you as you search for answers to problems.

Where do these “images” come from? As this puppy points out, they arise from many sources because our brains continually create them from our experiences as we interact with the world.



Now that you’ve had this introduction to imagery, I want to leave you with a simple exercise to help you begin exploring the right side of your brain.

Sit in a comfortable chair, close your eyes, and think about what you plan to do today. Take several relaxing breaths and ask yourself how you can do whatever you have to do with peace, joy and love.

Allow any images to arise without “thinking” about them—whether they come in the form of something you can see with your mind’s eye, or something you can hear, smell, or taste, or even something you might experience as a sense of touch.

Accept these images as gifts from your unconscious to support your intention to live life fully with peace, joy and love.

May you have peace, joy and love