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By Eve Delunas, Ph.D. | Issue #10 | August 4th, 2006



Photo by R. Stilgenbauer

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This monthly ezine is sent to those who register at: <http://www.innervisionresources.com> and is intended to offer guidance in employing universal principles and practical strategies to create the life you truly desire.

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1. Avoid Getting Emotionally Triggered in Your Relationships

Is someone pushing your buttons? Are you easily triggered by the things someone close to you says or does? Do you feel frustrated by a familiar negative pattern that keeps showing up in your most important relationships?

If so, there is a good chance you are under the negative spell of your past. While we are still held captive by our past, we unconsciously attract those people into our lives who trigger the same emotional reactions we experienced as a child. What's more, we respond to these others in much the same way that we did in our childhood. In this way, we re-create the drama of our childhood in our adult relationships.

For example, Tracy always gives in to her husband Mark's vehement demands that they spend their time and money in the ways that are most important to him. When Tracy timidly offers her opinion, Mark ignores her. Over time, Tracy has become increasingly resentful about not having a voice in the relationship. And yet, her fear of angering Mark prevents her from asserting herself with her husband.

Not surprisingly, Tracy's alcoholic parents neglected her wants and needs. What's more, she suffered physical abuse on those rare occasions when she attempted to stand up to her parents' unreasonable demands. Tracy never had a voice in childhood—and she has unconsciously recreated this pattern in her adult life.

What can Tracy do about this situation? She has three options:

Option A. She can blame Mark for the marital problems and try to change his behavior. As tempting as this option might seem, this approach is doomed to fail. Until Tracy makes some internal changes, it is unlikely that there will be a big shift in her relationship with Mark.

Option B. She can leave Mark and find someone new. However, until Tracy has dealt with the past that is holding her captive, she is likely to find herself in a similar situation with her next partner. As one psychotherapy client who came to see me after his fourth divorce said, "I am finally beginning to suspect that my failed marriages had something to do with me!"

Option C. She can make peace with her past, thereby freeing herself to respond differently in the present. As she heals her past, Tracy is likely to find her voice, fortify her belief that she deserves to be heard, and discover new ways of expressing her wants and needs to Mark without being intimidated by his anger.

Tracy will know she has liberated herself from the negative spell of her past when certain traumatic events in her history no longer hold an emotional charge for her. This means she can think about those events or talk about them without feeling strong negative emotions—like anger, resentment, sadness, powerlessness, guilt, shame, or fear.

As Tracy deactivates the emotional charge associated with painful events from her childhood and/or adolescence, she will find a new Self awakening within her that is more empowered, calm, centered, and clear. This new Self will identify alternative ways of responding to Mark which suddenly seem obvious, but which had never even occurred to her before

How do you free yourself from the negative effects of the past?

In my twenty-five years as a psychotherapist, I have found that one of the quickest and most powerful ways to free yourself of the negative hold of the past is by using visualization to REWRITE traumatic scenes. When you rewrite the traumatic past, you get to feel, express, and release the emotions associated with the event. You also have the opportunity to replace old, limiting beliefs with new, unlimited ones, and to empower yourself to right the wrongs that were done to you.

In hundreds of cases, I have witnessed the power of this method in helping individuals to make the kinds of internal changes which lead to permanent, positive shifts in their sense of self and in their typical ways of relating with others.

Try this process to discover what is getting triggered from your past:

1. Close your eyes and take some deep breaths.
2. Think of a situation in your present life that triggers an emotional reaction within you—perhaps stronger than you would reasonably expect under the circumstances. You may even tell yourself that you shouldn't be so upset, but you are unable to get your emotions under control. You may feel angry, depressed, scared, anxious, resentful, jealous, hurt, or any other strong emotion.
3. As you focus on the emotions you experience in the present-day situation, notice what you are feeling in your body. Where are you feeling the emotions in your body, and how do they feel? What are the physical sensations you are having in your body and what do they feel like? Describe to yourself how your body feels in as much detail as possible. For example, notice if any parts of your body feel hot, cold, light, heavy, loose, burning, tingling, aching, nauseous, swirling, or empty. If you notice how your stomach feels, ask yourself how your chest, back, legs, head, and neck feel. Scan as much as your body as you can.
4. Now keep your attention on the bodily feelings and sensations you experience in the present-day situation, and let your mind show you another time during your adolescence or childhood when you experienced the *same feelings and sensations in your body*. Don't think too hard about it. Just let it come to you easily. When a scene comes to mind, notice where you are, what is happening, and how you are feeling in the scene. Then just let the scene fade.
5. Again, keeping your attention on the bodily feelings and sensations you experience in the present-day situation, let your mind show you the first time or the most important time you experienced *the same feelings and sensations in your body*. Don't think too hard about it. Just let it come to you easily. When a scene comes to mind, notice where you are, what is happening, and how you are feeling in the scene. Once more, just let the scene fade.
6. After you have come back slowly and gradually to the present, open your eyes and write down a description of the scenes from your childhood and/or adolescence that you have just revisited.

Your current emotional triggers are likely to be connected to the scenes you have identified with this exercise. By using visualization to rewrite those scenes you can deactivate their emotional charge, reprogram early decisions you made about yourself and your life, and free yourself to respond in new, more effective and satisfying ways today!

If you would like more help with this, my book and accompanying CD set entitled *Breaking the Spell of the Past: Entering the Joyous Now* is a handbook that guides you, step-by-step, in using visualization to rewrite the past and awaken to a new Self.



2 . THIS MONTH'S SPECIAL OFFER



Buy a copy of Eve's book *Breaking the Spell of the Past: Entering the Joyous Now* and receive this FREE GUIDED MEDITATION DOWNLOAD by Dr. Eve Delunas:

Creating Your Heart Sanctuary 18:40 Music by Bjorn Lynne
Cultivate a sacred space within for healing and transformation. Attain deep states of inner peace and serenity, and become more connected to your inner guidance. Train yourself to remain calm and centered regardless of the stress in your daily life.

***Recommended as an introduction to guided meditation.*

This guided meditation is one of the exercises described in the book, *Breaking the Spell of the Past: Entering the Joyous Now*.

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This handbook provides detailed instruction in the use of 21 focused exercises so you can create more loving, harmonious, and satisfying relationships!



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3. ABOUT THE EDITOR/AUTHOR



I am a psychotherapist, speaker, author, and workshop trainer who has been using and teaching guided imagery techniques for over twenty-five years. I love helping you discover the power of your own imagination for healing yourself, transcending old limitations, and creating the life of your dreams.

Please visit my website at: <http://www.innervisionresources.com> to learn more about my books, guided visualization CDs, classes, and workshops. You will also find free articles there on a variety of topics, and a free ten minute guided meditation to download.

Is there something you would like me to address in this newsletter? Are there particular topics that are of greater interest to you? Do you have comments or questions regarding anything in this edition of "Awakenings" or from a previous edition?

I would love to hear from you! Send your comments to:
eve@innervisionresources.com.



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