



THE **POWER** OF **VISUALIZATION**

WHEN YOU VISUALIZE,
THEN YOU MATERIALIZE

ANGELA YOUNG

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Introduction

“If you dream it, you can achieve it.”

William Arthur Ward

The quote above and many others that have been spoken by wise men in the history of human beings point out the importance of visualizing an event before it occurs. “Dream” in the context of the above statement doesn’t refer to the images and visuals you see when sleeping or taking a nap. Rather, this refers to the goals you plan to achieve in your life.

The topsy-turvy nature of life makes it challenging for some people to have targets they intend to achieve. Some people would cite the example of the rumblings and shocking nature of the COVID-19 as a genuine reason you shouldn’t make plans or set targets in life. Some individuals will say that life is just like the stock market; nothing is certain.

There isn’t doubt that life can be volatile such that you are never sure of what happens next. However, if you decide against setting targets and goals you intend to achieve within some periods, you are living your life based on speculations. It’s not true that whatever will be, will be. You can decide what you want in life and accomplish it.

There are many great examples of people who have achieved tangible success because they leveraged the power of visualization. You can become one of such people when you leverage the tips in this book. The journey begins with what visualization is and ends with how you can succeed with it. Enjoy the ride!

CHAPTER 1

WHAT IS VISUALIZATION?



Chapter 1: What is Visualization?

One of the worst kept secrets in the world is that the mind is a powerful “place” and what you feed it can affect you in a powerful way. Forget about the impressive wordplay; it’s the reality. Countless numbers of books have been written about how your state of mind affects your life. Visualization is one of the most effective “weapons” of the mind that is capable of setting you up for the glorious future you desire. The aim of this chapter is to help you know what visualization is all about by highlighting what it’s not.

What Visualization isn’t

One of the best ways to learn about something is to first identify what it’s not, and we will start this journey with this approach. Just like most popular concepts and phenomena, there are many descriptions and beliefs about visualization that are either blown out of proportion or totally false.

In order to ensure that you haven’t been a victim of some of the common overhypes and conjectures surrounding visualization, we will highlight them. Below are some common myths of visualization.

Myth #1: Wishing and Hoping Something Happens

It's true that visualization involves creating a mental image of a target you intend to achieve. However, it's delusional and misleading to assume that visualization is all about wishing and hoping that something happens. This ridiculously simplified view of this concept is the reason many people never achieve anything tangible with visualization. They assume that they are practicing and utilizing this phenomenon, but that's not the case.

Rather, visualization involves using your thoughts to engineer a certain result and what you will need to do to achieve it. In other words, visualization doesn't end with thinking about what you want to achieve. Instead, it also involves imagination regarding the steps you'll need to take to accomplish the target. If all you do is imagining yourself achieving a target without thinking about how you will achieve it, you are in the realm of fantasies.

Myth #2: Visualization isn't Scientific

In the bid to discredit visualization, some people would say that the practice isn't scientific. However, this claim is far from the truth. Scientists have proven that visualization affects our brains in certain ways that promote the achievement of our goals. Therefore, it's in your best interest to verify any assertion before you believe it.

The modern world offers us endless resources on the internet to evaluate the veracity of any claim. So, you'll be doing yourself a lot of good by checking your facts before

you agree with any popular opinion. In the subsequent chapters, we will explore the scientific evidence that validates the effectiveness of visualization.

Myth #3: Visualization is for Lazy Dreamers

This claim comes from the assumption that visualization is all about sitting on a couch dreaming about buying up Microsoft. Nonetheless, as mentioned earlier, this is far from the truth. World-beaters such as Jim Carey, Oprah Winfrey, and Will Smith have openly discussed how they were able to achieve their dreams by leveraging visualization.

If you know these people, you'll know that they aren't lazy people. Rather, their thought process fueled their desire to move from where they were to where they are. So, visualization isn't for lazy people who live in the realm of fantasy. Instead, it's for people who are deliberate about what they want in life and will go all out to accomplish it.

Myth #4: Visualization is Only Effective for Long-Term Targets

What you intend to accomplish doesn't have to be in fifteen or twenty years before you can employ visualization. As long as the target you intend to achieve is in the future, you can leverage this practice. Therefore, even if your target is something that can be achieved within a week or a month, visualization remains relevant.

In fact, it's more likely you achieve success with visualization when working on a short-term goal than a long-term one. A lot of things happen when you have long-term targets that can make you distracted. In some cases, you stop seeing the goal as

important as when you first thought about it. So, you might abandon a long-term target along the line.

Visualization or Meditation?

One of the questions people ask is whether they should choose visualization over meditation. This question ought not to be perplexing or complicated. Just like visualization, many studies have established the benefits of practicing meditation. These two techniques are interwoven, and they share some similarities. However, they aren't the same.

Visualization focuses on the mind more, while meditation involves both the mind and body. Meditation is broader and more complex than visualization and offers more benefits. So, choosing between the two depends on what you want. If all you want to do is set your mind right and keep yourself motivated to achieve your dream, visualization is what you need.

However, if you desire to achieve inner peace by shutting down the noise in your head and drown the voice of your inner critic, you need meditation. The beautiful thing about this choice is that you don't have to choose one. You can practice both meditation and visualization without any issue. In fact, you can incorporate visualization during your meditation.



So, while practicing your breathing techniques, you can take advantage of that period to think about your dreams and how you can achieve them. So, instead of using a mantra or object as your focal point, you can focus on your targets and your action plan to achieve them. The inner tranquility that meditation brings can make your visualization more effective.

Visualization in the Modern World

Elite athletes are known for employing visualization-based techniques such as guided imagery and scripting in their training. They use these methods to overcome fear and stimulate practice. They even leverage these techniques to recover from injuries. Sports and medical experts understand that the fact that two people are

suffering from the same type of injury doesn't mean that they will recover at the same time.

There have situations where a particular athlete is expected to return to action in six months. However, to the surprise of the coaches and medical team, the person will recover in four months! Many people would claim that the differences in immune systems are the reason for it. Indeed, we cannot rule that out. Nonetheless, it's not that simple.

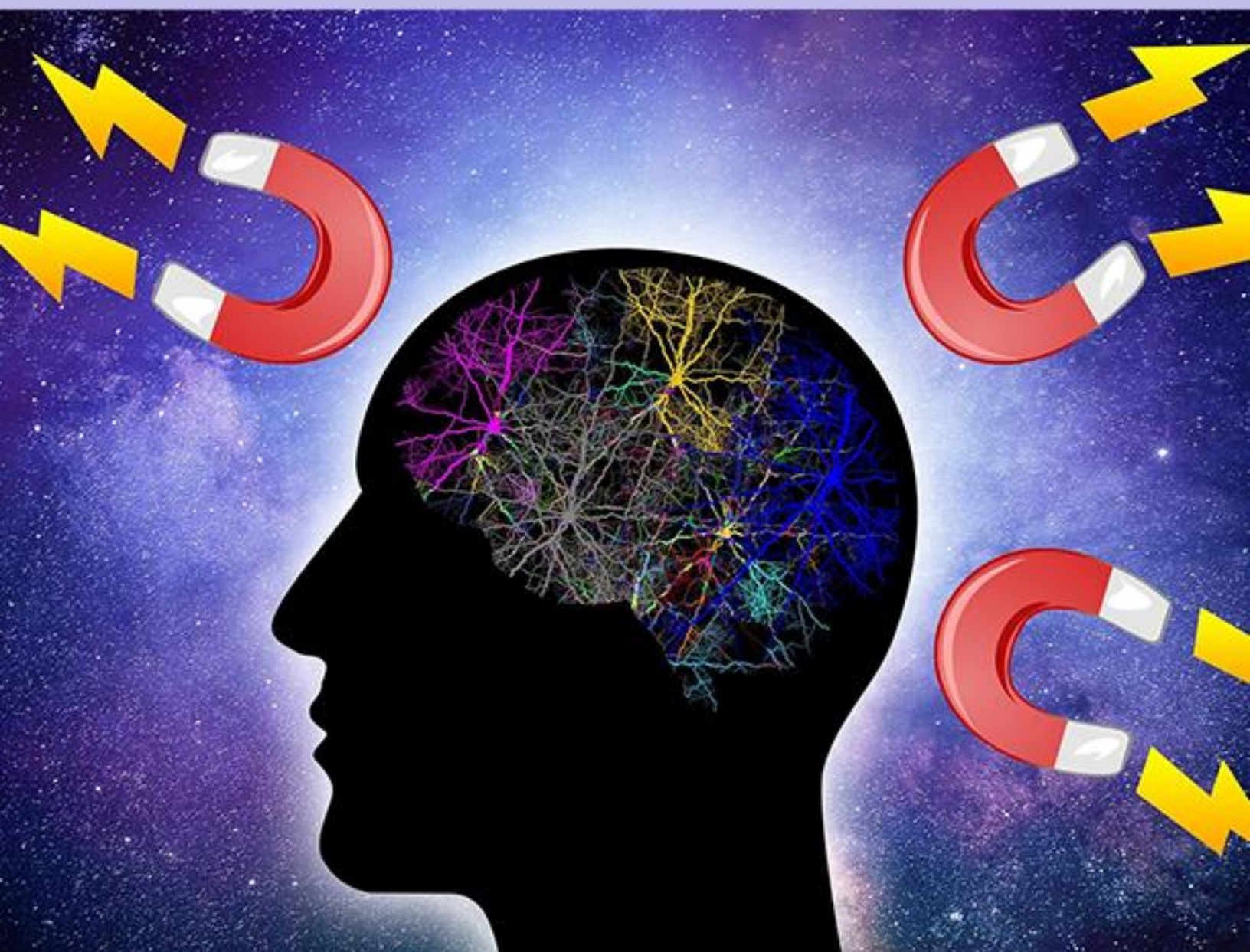
Scientists have discovered that mind-based practices such as meditation and visualization affect our immune system. Studies have been able to establish a link between these practices and the functioning of the body's defense system. These techniques boost the immune system. Therefore, it makes perfect sense that people who leverage visualization recover faster than people who don't.

In a report published by New York Times, Olympic freestyle skier, Emily Cook, detailed her experience after practicing visualization. According to her, she was able to recover after two years of missing in action due to injuries. In her own words, *"I would say into the recorder: 'I'm standing on the top of the hill. I can feel the wind on the back of my neck. I can hear the crowd..."*

She also explained that she takes advantage of this practice to develop a new trick. According to her, visualization has played a key role in her success and journey as an athlete. Note that you don't have to be an athlete to enjoy the benefits of practicing this technique. You can leverage this practice in any field to reach the apex of your career.

CHAPTER 2

DOES VISUALIZATION
REALLY WORK?



Chapter 2: Does Visualization Really Work?

If visualization doesn't work, there's no point in practicing it. There are many arguments for and against the use of imageries to catapult you to your destination. This chapter will explore the arguments that support the effectiveness of this practice. We will approach it by highlighting the scientific proofs that back up visualization.

The Science behind Visualization

In simple terms, visualization is a training of your mind to stimulate you to achieve your targets. The more you set your gaze on something, the higher your chances of achieving it. In other words, if you're not expecting much from life, it is not likely that you will ever amount to anything substantial. A recurrent theme in the story of celebrities is how they had envisaged a better future for themselves and work hard towards making it a reality. So, it is certain that the success people have had from visualization couldn't have been by coincidence.

Does science offer an explanation? Certainly! The science behind visualization revolves around the activities of neurochemicals in the brain. Your thoughts create neural patterns in your brain. The motor cortex connects visualization and actions. The motor cortex is activated when you think about doing something, such as raising your arm or taking a few steps forward. So, imaginations help you to remember and

have a mental rehearsal of your planned movement. The neural pattern your brain creates makes those events feel real to you.

Basketball players have a strange practice that many people find weird. They train to improve their accuracy without actually shooting a ball! Interestingly, they get the desired result. How is that possible? They train their brain to succeed in shooting. So, they end up being able to replicate their imaginations with the ball. Your imaginations stimulate your nervous system, and the result of that stimulation can be mind-blowing in many cases.

So, you can change the course of your life by designing your future with your thoughts. Your nervous system responds by linking your thoughts to your actions. Therefore, you are closer to your dreams when you leverage visualization techniques. You are envisaging positive events, and you will be driven to your destination by those thoughts in the long run.



Mental Practices are as Effective as Physical Practices

One of the reasons visualization is effective is that mental practices are as crucial as physical practices, according to scientists. In a study, investigators examined the possibility of gaining muscle strength by using mental power. The study involved thirty young participants. The first group was trained to perform mental contractions of the little finger, while the second group performed mental contractions of elbow flexion.

The third group was a control group. Therefore, they didn't receive mental training but were asked to participate in all measurements. The investigators concluded that the mental training employed enhanced the cortical output signal. This enhancement

led to the driving of the muscles to a higher activation level. It also increased the muscle strength of the participants.

The result of this study shows that mental practices can have similar effects as physical activities. Indeed, it isn't possible for mental training to have the same results. However, scientists have proven that mental practices can stimulate physical activities. This discovery shows how far we can inspire ourselves towards the achievement of our goals when we train our minds to reach our destinations.

Evidence from Virtual Workouts

Virtual workouts are some of the practices of the modern world that would have been unimaginable some years before now. The advent of the COVID-19 pandemic made them more popular due to the inability of people to go out because of lockdowns imposed across the world. Virtual workouts involve the use of technology to bring about a combination of workouts and virtual reality. In other words, it gives the same feeling of being in a class with an instructor despite staying at home and not moving weights.

There have been arguments for and counterarguments regarding the effectiveness of these digital exercises. Nonetheless, many people have claimed that they have been beneficiaries of these arrangements. Further evidence of the effect of mental activity on physical actions can be found in a study carried out by the Cleveland Clinic Foundation. In this study, people who went to the gym were compared with people who were involved in virtual workouts in their heads.

According to *Psychology Today*, the participants who visit physical gyms reported a 30% increase in their muscle strength. Interestingly, those involved in virtual workouts had a 13.5% increase. All they did was to think about exercising, and they became stronger! Wow! The result of this study confirms the fact athletes have always known all along – creating imaginations about your goal is crucial to its achievement.

So, it shouldn't be too shocking that many people from all walks of life are recording tremendous success and achievements by leveraging visualization. It is becoming more obvious by the day that the human mind is a powerful creator that can inspire great feats. Initially, many people thought visualization was nothing more than another modern-day hype full of expectations but offering nothing in reality. However, things are different now. Many doubters are now jumping on the ship.

Evidence from Stroke Patients

Whenever we visualize an action, certain brain regions are activated that stimulate the performance of the action. Studies involving stroke victims has proven that brain activities can inspire the accomplishment of physical actions. Stroke patients don't have blood flowing to the region of their brain where there is a blood clot in the artery. As a result of this blockage, blood tissues in that part of the brain will start dying, and this can lead to the paralysis of some parts of the body.

Srinivasan Pillay, the author of the books *Your Brain and Business* and *Life Unlocked*, has a comprehensive explanation of how brain images help such people. While writing in his Huffington Post column, he explained that creating

imaginations about moving a limb even after its paralysis due to stroke increases blood flow in that direction. In fact, the flow can be so intense that it will diminish the amount of tissue death in that part of the body. Intriguing, isn't it?

This claim shows that stroke victims can still be able to keep some parts of their brain active by leveraging visualization. They might not be able to move some parts of the body again, but their brains are still working hard to stimulate them. If stroke victims can have this stimulation, how much more people who have the full use of their limbs and other parts of their bodies?

Once you start imagining an event, every part of your body will start envisaging the day you will experience the imagination. They are powered by your brain to spur you to ensure that you go all out to make those thoughts a reality. In the next chapter, we will proceed to investigate the link between the brain and visualization to help you leverage the association to your benefit.

CHAPTER 3

HOW VISUALIZATION AFFECTS THE BRAIN



Chapter 3: How Visualization Affects the Brain

The brain is one of the smallest organs of the body. However, it's the most important. Whatever affects your brain will affect you one way or the other. Your brain determines what is real to you. Some imaginations can be so strong that they will feel like reality. In this chapter, we will look at the way imagery affects your brain and how you can leverage that to enhance your chance of success.

The Brain Thinks in Images

The human brain is designed to think in images. Before your body carries out any activity, it is first pictured inside your brain. Over time, the brain learns your routines and makes them automatic. This automation is the reason some people struggle with certain destructive habits. When you think about an action, your body doesn't carry it out immediately. Your brain will first signal the motor cortex below the threshold required to activate the action.

There are various factors that determine whether this spark will translate to actions eventually. One of them is your motivation and desire to produce the action. Studies have proven that when you imagine yourself in the first person, there is a higher

chance you will carry out the action than when you think about yourself in the second or third person. It's also vital to note that consistency makes the action believable to trigger its performance.

You cannot leverage visualization successfully when you have a culture of changing your goals. You cannot plan to become an athlete the previous week and say you have other plans the week after that. Your brain won't have a consistent picture to process. The resultant effect of that is that you will not have enough motivation to succeed in anything. Therefore, you have to take your time before deciding what you plan to achieve with your life.

Imagination or Reality

One of the reasons visualization is effective is because the brain eventually assumes that your imaginations are realities. For example, when you learn something new such as how to ride a bike, the memory will make an imprint in your brain. When you keep thinking about practicing the skill, the imprint becomes stronger in your brain. It is at this stage that you find it easier to recall anything regarding that task or skill. When you think about performing the skill, it feels real sometimes.

The reason you have such a sensation is that your brain cannot differentiate between imagination and a real event. This is the same reason some people would ejaculate by imagining themselves having sex with an attractive person. It sounds strange, but that is the truth, and researchers have confirmed it. A study carried out by the International Coaching Academy that was published in its neuroscience and visualization research paper proves that this claim is true.

According to the researchers, your brain will begin to respond to an idea as though it was a real object if you exercise it in your mind over and over again. The paper explained that the reason for this response is due to the activities of the thalamus. The thalamus is responsible for the reality-making process of the brain. Interestingly, this region of the brain doesn't distinguish between internal and external realities. So, when you contemplate an idea long enough, it will start looking real.

You will start feeling that you can achieve it because it looks real to you. This perception of your brain is the first motivating step towards achieving a goal. It will spur other parts of the brain and your body to take deliberate actions that will make it possible for you to reach the target.

Visualization and the Reticular Activating System

The effect of visualization on the brain's Reticular Activating System (RAS) is one of the reasons it helps people achieve the kind of remarkable results people get from leveraging this practice. When you have a culture of creating imaginations about your goals, your brain will be more active to ensure that you pay more attention to opportunities that would help you accomplish the goal. For example, you'll be more conscious when you see an advert about learning the keyboard because you want to become a music star.

That same advert will not draw the attention of a person who wants to be an athlete because he or she doesn't have such imaginations. Your RAS plays a vital role in making you pay more attention to things related to your dreams. The RAS acts in many capacities, and one of them is as a gatekeeper that selects the information that

should be brought into your consciousness and the ones that should be in the background.

You are often bombarded with millions of stimuli and information every second of your life. So, it isn't possible for you to pay attention to everything at the same time. Your subconscious mind can only handle about 11 million items per second. However, your conscious mind can only process 40 to 120 items per second. Therefore, there is no way you will not lose sight of some things. Your brain has to filter out what is irrelevant and keep the relevant ones, and it is the job of the RAS to make this selection.

Safety and Interest

When the RAS is choosing the information to discard and the ones to keep, it bases its selection on two parameters – safety and interest. In other words, the RAS gives priority to information that will keep you safe. The next on the list are those things that you find interesting. Your RAS will assume that something is important and exciting to you when you think about it a lot.

So, by employing visualization, you are training your brain to prioritize information and items that are connected to your goals. You'll see opportunities in things that don't make any sense to others because they are connected to your goals. Your consciousness has been heightened to recognize things that can increase your chances of making your dreams a reality. So, whenever you see such things, your attention will be drawn to them instantly.



Your brain is alert, and it will start functioning like a satellite looking for a particular signal. Once it finds it, it jerks you up to do something about it. You can deliberately train your mind to help you locate opportunities by leveraging visualization. Those thoughts you have created will become the template for the kind of things your brain will see as important. It will ensure that you don't overlook such things whenever you see them.

CHAPTER 4

PERKS OF VISUALIZATION



Chapter 4: Perks of Visualization

If there are no benefits that people enjoy when they practice visualization, the practice cannot enjoy the kind of wide acceptance it has today. There are various ways you can improve your life and experience when you practice visualization. Here are some of the commonest ones.

Stress Reduction

The modern world is full of stressors, and it's now a generally accepted claim that we cannot do without them. In fact, you cannot achieve anything substantial without a level of stress. You will be exposed to stressors when you are working hard to reach the peak of your career. In the same way, you will be stressed to a certain degree when you are trying to become a top athlete or a successful entrepreneur. However, you cannot let stress get the best of you because that won't be good for your mental and physical health.

Therefore, it's crucial that you find means of managing your stress level to keep your body and mind together. The good news is that you can leverage visualization as an effective stress management technique. How is that possible? Creating images of success and planning to achieve it reduces your anxiety because it makes you feel

that you are in control. Nothing is scarier than feeling that you have lost control of your life.

Harmony with yourself

Your dreams and goals show your personality. In other words, in an ideal situation, the kind of things you want to achieve shows your worldview and beliefs. For example, the reason you desire to be at the peak of your career might be because you want to earn a lot of money to be able to help others. So, when you visualize that dream, you will also have imagery of making the world better.

Such imaginations make you feel at home with yourself. It gives you a sense of purpose and self-worth because you feel that you are embarking on a journey that will establish your personality. Every step you take towards reaching your destination will make you happy and satisfied because you are doing something that means a lot to you. This harmony is the reason goal-setting experts advise people to set targets that fit into the big picture of their lives.

Clarity

It can be challenging to keep your focus in the modern world because you have more than enough things to distract you. People are succeeding in various things that weren't in existence some years ago. There are several career paths that can give you the same targets. If what you want is financial independence, there are more than a thousand ways you can achieve that goal in the modern world. So, it is crucial that you choose a path that will help you maximize your strength.

Visualization enables you to choose what you want to achieve and stick to it. Remember that every career path has its ditches and challenges. Imagery will help you to plan ahead and wade off distractions. You'll see others treading a different path and achieving success, but you will need to keep your eyes on the ball. Believe in the process and reap the rewards later.

Mastery of New Skills

How can you learn and master new skills when you have never imagined learning and mastering them. As mentioned earlier, Olympic freestyle skier, Emily Cook, has been one of the beneficiaries of visualization in this regard. Imageries help you to project towards learning and mastering new skills because you will first imagine how it feels when you complete your training.

For example, if you are learning how to play the guitar, your imagination will inspire you as you think about how the crowd will cheer after a great performance. There will be days when you won't be motivated to continue learning. However, because you keep recreating the satisfaction, you'll derive from achieving your target, you'll encourage yourself. You'll keep striving until you have the finesse and mastery you crave.

Enhanced Motivation

You cannot get to the finishing line in any journey when you aren't passionate. It is zealotry that makes you put in your best to attain a target. The truth is that the

uncertain nature of life makes it impossible to be sure about the outcome of anything. However, there are some things you can do that increase your chance of success. One of them is having the motivation and desire to do all that is necessary to accomplish a goal.

Remember that motivation comes from your state of mind. When you have imaginations of achieving your targets with a clear path to achieve them, it makes you zealous to go all out to accomplish them. When you know what you need to do, you'll not have issues with believing the process and staying patient. You'll be able to stay committed because you know you will reach your target someday.

Generation of Creative Ideas

You need to be creative to succeed in the modern world. The ultra-competitive nature of the 21st century requires thinking out of the box to stand out. There are many people doing the things you do. So, you need to be able to offer qualities that are rare to become indispensable in your company or industry. You need creativity to solve problems and reinvent the wheel when necessary.

Visualization increases your creativity by helping you envisage the likely challenges that can frustrate your effort. While creating imageries in your mind, you'll also identify the potential problems, enabling you to prepare for them. Visualization helps you to analyze the current approaches to a task and how you can make things better. People are always seeking upgrades on the current solutions, and you will be an instant hit when you can offer them better alternatives to solving their problems.

Improved Performance

As mentioned earlier, athletes leverage imagery to improve their performance. Besides, whatever enhances your motivation, gives you clarity, and helps you to generate creative ideas will definitely improve your performance. Visualization boosts your confidence, which is a key ingredient that enables you to become a winner in every sphere of your life. When you have low self-esteem, you won't be ambitious.



You'll deliberately set low targets because you're afraid of failing. You don't want people to say that you started something you couldn't finish. So, instead of going for the things you really desire, you'll settle for the things that you will achieve without

stress. If you keep running away from challenges, you will never be great. Embrace challenges, visualize them, and give it all you have got.

CHAPTER 5

COMMON INHIBITIONS OF
THE POWER
OF VISUALIZATION



Chapter 5: Common Inhibitions of the Power of Visualization

If something is working for others, but you aren't getting the same result, it's either something is wrong with that thing or you. If you aren't getting the same positive results that many people enjoy when they practice visualization, it might be because you are practicing it wrongly. This chapter is diagnostic because it aims to identify "symptoms" of a wrong approach to visualization. If your visualization isn't yielding the desired outcomes, it might be due to one or more of the following reasons.

Ambiguous Goals

When you don't have a clear-cut goal, you cannot set your mind in the right direction to achieve it. You shouldn't set targets that are hazy because they will become unrealistic and unattainable in the long run. For example, you cannot say that your dream is to become the best in your field. It sounds reasonable and admirable at first glance. However, a critical look at the statement shows that it is vague.

What do you mean by best in your field? What are the parameters you will use to judge and know when you have achieved that goal? A dream that isn't clearly defined is just a fantasy that will never leave the realm of your imagination.

However, it's better when your goal involves specific milestones and benchmarks, such as winning a coveted award that will distinguish you from others in your field.

Short-Term or Long-Term?

The requirements for achieving long-term goals aren't the same for short-term goals. So, you need to know what you need to do in both situations. Short-term goals require a lot of commitment, focus, motivation, and energy because you need to accomplish the target within a short period. However, it's a different ball game when you want to achieve a goal that will take months or years.

For example, if you want to become a medical expert, it's not something you can achieve within weeks of training. This target and similar long-term goals require patience. Therefore, if you cannot hang in there and wade off distractions, you won't be able to attain them. You might have a mental route regarding how you will reach your destination. However, if you get distracted or frustrated along the line, you will abandon the project and find something else you can do with your life.

Pessimism

Negative thoughts are the enemies of visualization. If your mind is full of doubts and disbelief in your ability to achieve your dream, your efforts will be futile. Remember that every substantial target has its challenges. It's your mindset that will see you through during those difficult times. If you allow the thoughts and voices of pessimism to dominate your mind, you will give up at some point.

Therefore, you should do all you can to kick out the voices in your head saying that you will end up like someone you know who failed at what you are trying to achieve. We all have fears, and it is okay to be scared sometimes. However, you have to face your fears head-on and damn the consequences of your commitment to achieve your dream. Fill your mind with positive thoughts that will inspire you to keep your eyes on the ball.

Lack of Ambition

Being overambitious isn't good because it can lead to desperation. Meanwhile, when you are desperate, you can lose everything valuable for you to achieve your dream. You can compromise on your relationship with your loved ones and your health when you can do anything to accomplish a target. However, you cannot achieve anything monumental when you aren't ambitious.

You need a strong desire to get to the finishing line to achieve anything substantial. When you aren't ambitious, you will take whatever cards life has dealt you. You cannot afford to go through life without the desire to make a mark. You should have things you want to achieve that will give you a sense of achievement. Visualization cannot be effective when you don't have a strong determination to become the best you can be.

Low Commitment

As mentioned early, visualization isn't all about creating images in your head and expecting things to work out somehow. Anyone who thinks they can make a mark

in life with that languid and lackadaisical approach has no clue regarding what it takes to be an achiever. Visualization isn't a magical practice that gives you results from thin air. Anyone who tells you that you can become great by just imagining greatness is only introducing you to a Ponzi scheme.

There are certain rules you have to follow before you can stand up to be counted among the successful people in this world. One of them is that you have to be committed to whatever it is you want to achieve. Once you visualize the dream, you have to be ready to put in the hard work necessary to accomplish it.

Lack of Training

You cannot achieve your dream when you don't have a clue regarding how you can accomplish it. For example, if you want to be a highly-rated investor, you need to know what it takes. You'll need training and mentorship from people who can help you reach your target. It's always better to be trained by people who have achieved your target before. Such people will be able to provide you with the knowledge and tips you need.

They will be able to provide practical guidance for you because of their experience. They know the likely potholes in your journey, and they will warn you about them before you get there. You don't have to learn by making mistakes because they can be costly sometimes. It's always better to learn from the errors of others so that you can avoid the same pitfall they fell into. Visualization without getting trained to succeed is just a joke.

Inactivity

An inactive person isn't serious about achieving anything in life. You cannot achieve your dreams when you aren't actively working towards them. Visualization isn't a practice that keeps you sitting somewhere, hoping things work out miraculously. Rather, it fills your boot with the fire to go all out to do all you can to make things work out. Don't confuse patience with inactivity because they aren't the same.

There might be periods when you have no choice other than to wait. However, patience doesn't mean that you'll not be doing anything. Rather, it is all about believing in the process rather than getting frustrated because you are yet to achieve your targets. Visualization cannot have any impact on the life of a lazy person. You must never rest on your laurels until you have reached your destination.

Lack of Perseverance



When you imagine yourself attaining a target, you need to persevere until your imagination becomes a reality. There is a gap between your imaginations and their fulfillment. It is in your best interest to fill that gap with patience and perseverance. You need these virtues to bridge the realm of reality and the realm of dreams. You need to be dogged enough to hang in there when things are not going the way you want them.

You should also be resilient enough to recover when it seems your dreams are getting shattered. There will be moments like that when it looks as though you'll never reach your destination. You also need people who'll help you keep calm and keep fighting until the end. Visualization is a means and not the end. Perseverance is one of the keys that will help you to make your imaginations a reality.

CHAPTER 6

VISUALIZATION TECHNIQUES



Chapter 6: Visualization Techniques

There's no point in knowing about the benefits you stand to enjoy when you don't know how to go about it. Visualization is more technical than creating images about an event and planning to achieve it. There are some techniques you need to understand that will help you succeed when practicing visualization. This chapter will highlight and explain them to give you the best experience.

Mental Rehearsal

Mental rehearsal is one of the commonest visualization techniques, and many people practice it. It involves creating imaginations of your success in your goal. If you are an athlete, you might picture yourself crossing the finishing line to the roar and applause of adoring fans.

If you are planning to have a major promotion, you can imagine yourself shaking the hand of your CEO as he says congratulations to you. This simple technique is powerful enough to help you create visuals that will drive you towards making your dream a reality.

Triggered Visuals

The human mind is notoriously adept at connecting experiences together. That is why you can experience a flood of emotions after a powerful memory has been triggered due to a faint whiff of a scent. You can deliberately create this trigger by identifying them and the kind of feeling they make you have.

For example, if there is a song that makes you think about your goal, play it anytime you need something to motivate you to keep your eyes on the ball. You might train for a competition with a particular playlist. Play them when it is time to perform. It enables you to remember the sacrifices and efforts you have put in, spurring you to perform.

Issue yourself Cheque

This visualization technique is not as common as the rest, but some people have derived outstanding results by using it. It involves writing yourself a cheque. This technique is limited because it is all about earning a huge amount of money. It is worth a try if you have a plan to become a millionaire at a certain age in your life.

Jim Carey, a famous comedian, is a fantastic example of a person that utilized this technique and achieved success with it. He wrote himself a cheque of \$10 million ten years before he eventually became a millionaire. If it worked for him, it could also work for you.

Leverage a Vision Board

The first two techniques described so far focused on utilizing your mind. However, you can take things a notch higher by using tangible images. You can achieve this by creating a vision board. This board is a collection of images and photographs that reminds you of your targets and helps you keep your focus.

Leveraging a vision board is crucial, especially for people suffering from a condition called aphantasia. People suffering from this condition are incapable of forming mental pictures. If you're trying to lose weight, you can create a vision board full of people with the ideal shape you want.



Make your Goals Physical with a Notecard

You might not fancy the last method, especially when your target isn't monetary. If you need a way to make your targets tangible when they don't involve money, using a notecard is a viable option. Writing down your goals on a notecard makes them more grounded in the real world.

Ensure that you write these aims in a way that exudes confidence and assurance. For example, you shouldn't write something like "I want to improve my relationship with my friends and family." Instead, you should write, "I will improve my relationship with my friends and family." It's crucial that you put these notecards in places you can see them regularly.

Turn your Wants into Beliefs

One of the reasons some people don't get the desired result from visualization is that they frame their dreams as things they want to happen instead of things they believe will happen. This little tweak can be the magic wand you have been waiting for that will bridge the gap between your dreams and reality.

When you hope something happens, you'll have doubts. Meanwhile, when you aren't confident that you can achieve something, it affects your commitment to its accomplishment. However, when you are convinced you will achieve a goal, you will be more inspired to go all out to make it happen.

Locate your Happy Place

You should have that place in your life that you can go to when you want to be away from the pressures of life. One of the ways visualization can help you reduce stress is when you practice it in your “safe haven”. Your happy place might be when you are isolated on a boat in the middle of a pool of water.

For some people, they are at peace with themselves when they are sitting in the midst of rocks somewhere away from home. It doesn't matter where you choose. What matters is that it is a location where you find inner peace. Think about your future and how you will achieve your dreams whenever you are in that place.

Rehearse Challenging Situations

When you're about to face a potentially dicey situation, a visualization technique that can come in handy is rehearsing the event. For example, if you need to have a meeting with your boss about increasing your pay rise, you can leverage this method. This discussion is sensitive because it might make the person think you're driven by money.

So, it's in your best interest to plan how you will present your case without ruffling any feathers. After all, your goal is to get a pay rise and not a sack letter or fight with your boss. Imagine the discussion and the likely questions he or she might ask you. Put yourself in your employer's shoes.

Plan for Multiple Outcomes

It's always good to stay positive and expectant that you'll get the kind of result you desire. However, it's not always the case. If you are preparing for a race, regardless of your training and preparation, you might either win or lose. You should see yourself winning.

However, what will you do if you lose? Will you walk away in annoyance, or will you be gracious in defeat and still congratulate the winner? The fact that you didn't win a particular competition doesn't mean that you will not win another time. So, plan your reactions in case things don't go your way long before the event.

Choose a Role Model

Regardless of what you're experiencing, there have been other people that have gone through them before. For example, if you're experiencing a setback, there are people who have also been disappointed before. For example, Steve Jobs was famously ousted from Apple. How was he able to recover?

Visualization isn't only for creating dreams and achieving them. It can also be used to recover after a setback. Think about someone who has gone through this same path in the past. Find out how he or she was able to turn things around and form your thoughts around that.

Wade off Negative Emotions

As mentioned earlier, one of the inhibitions to successful visualization is negative emotions. You need to be more dogged when you have failed in the past in what you're trying to achieve. It's natural that the thoughts and images of failure will fly through your mind.

However, you must fight them off by being vocal. When defeating and limiting thoughts fly through your mind, turn them around and think positive thoughts. If you are finding it challenging to think positive thoughts, speak positive affirmations. You cannot afford to let negative energy ruin your motivation.

CHAPTER 7

**HOW TO USE THE POWER
OF VISUALIZATION TO
ACHIEVE YOUR DREAMS**



Chapter 7: How to Use the Power of Visualization to Achieve your Dreams

This chapter is a continuation of the previous ones. It contains more tips that will enable you to leverage the power of visualization to achieve your dreams. However, unlike the last one, it is more systematic.

Choose a SMART Goal

Setting goals is the foundation of visualization. If you don't have things you want to accomplish, then there's no reason to create imageries for anything. So, you need to start by deciding what you want to achieve. SMART stands for specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and time-bound. When your goals don't have these characteristics, you are just emotional.

Specific means that the goal is clearly spelled out and not vague, while measurable means that there are benchmarks and milestones that indicate the achievement of the target. Achievable means that the goal is realistic, while relevant means that the target is connected to meaningfulness. Finally, time-bound means that you intend to achieve the goal within a specific period.

Envision it in Detail

After choosing your target, the next step involves creating imaginations around the goal. Imagine yourself performing and achieving the goal. If your dream is to become a medical doctor, imagine yourself treating people and helping them to recover from pains and diseases. In the same way, if your target is to learn how to play the piano, imagine yourself dazzling a crowd with your skills.

However, don't just be fixated at the end. Begin by thinking about the process of achieving your target. For example, think about the training process and how you'll choose to endure all the difficulties that might come during the period. Determine not to quit regardless of the challenges that come your way while envisioning the process.

Employ all your Senses

All your senses have to be involved during visualization. You will engage your sense of smell, sight, sound, taste, and feel. What will you be wearing on your graduation day? How will it feel on your body? What kind of food will be available on that day? Your mind has to capture all these details and engage your senses to make them as real as possible.

When your thoughts have been able to capture the details and translate them to your senses, you will keep working hard to ensure that it comes to pass. You'll want to get to the finishing because you want to have an actual experience of your imagination. Therefore, you will buckle down and get to work because you have dreams to achieve.

Be a Storyteller

You can aid your imagery by writing a story of your success. Emily Cook employs this approach. Investigators have discovered that people who write out their goals have a higher chance to achieve them than individuals who don't. You don't have to write it down in a book. Instead, you can record it as audio. Then play it to yourself at different times. Playing it to yourself multiple times will help you to encode the words in your brain, helping you to form images of it easily.

Scientists have found that various parts of your brain are activated when you synthesize an experience by using multiple senses. The resultant effect of this activation is a powerful visualization and more productivity. So, you will be boosting your chances of creating images that will spur you to success when you write and record your expectations and read or listen to them repeatedly.

Be Flexible

It's always good to have multiple roadmaps in life to avoid being stranded. You cannot afford to be rigid because things don't always happen exactly as you want them. So, while thinking about a particular target and how you can achieve it, you should also think of similar alternatives in case things didn't turn out the way you planned them.

For example, if you're trying to learn the piano, you can see learning the guitar as another alternative in case you find the going too tough. Indeed, this isn't an option you should plan to exercise. However, it will come in handy in case you had to seek

a different option. There's no point sticking with something if the best you can be at it is an average performer.

Identify Inner Obstacles

After writing down your goal and creating imaginations of it, it's crucial that you identify the likely challenges that can frustrate your effort. You need to start from the internal factors such as your confidence, self-esteem, and motivation. Whether you realize it or not, you have control over these things. No one can shatter your confidence or reduce your self-esteem if you don't allow them. In the same way, no one can make you lose the motivation and desire to achieve your dreams if you don't empower them to that extent in your life.

There will always be people who will discourage you regardless of what you want to achieve. You should think about the likely criticisms that can be levied against your targets beforehand. Provide reasonable and logical responses to those allegations before anyone comes up with them. You should be your own greatest critic to ensure that you will be able to stand against the scorching words of destructive critics.

Identify External Obstacles

You don't have only internal issues to contend with whenever you are trying to accomplish a target. There are also external factors that can derail your ambition. Funding can be a critical factor that can make it impossible for you to achieve some things. You should plan for it as you think about how you will reach your destination.

You can always ask people you know who can give you tips regarding how you can get money to finance your dreams. You might be surprised to find out that there are opportunities such as grants that can make things easier. Don't be a lone ranger because it makes you susceptible to being stranded.

Implement Intentions

Whenever you're trying to achieve a goal, there will always be doubts rising in your heart. It only shows that you are a human being. However, you shouldn't let anything stop you. The last phase of visualization is the implementation of your intentions. Start with the simple things first.

You might need to talk to an experienced person first before you get started. You need to be careful when trying to talk to people because some conversations with some people can drain out all your energy and motivation. It's always better to speak to people who are either doing what you want to do or have succeeded in it.



CHAPTER 8

HABITS THAT OPTIMIZE VISUALIZATION POWER



Chapter 8: Habits that Optimize Visualization Power

Just like meditation, there are some habits that can help you to get the best experience from visualization. Earlier, we have highlighted some things that can inhibit your ability to use imagery. In this final chapter, we will explore the habits that can increase your ability to leverage imagination to achieve your dreams. Below are some habits you need to inculcate that can optimize your visualization power.

Living in the Moment

Despite the fact that we face unpleasant situations sometimes, life is also full of beautiful days, people, events, and things. However, you can become so engrossed in anxiety and fears of the future that you'll stop "living." In other words, you'll let moments pass you by without experiencing them. People could be laughing and happy around you, but you'll not find reasons to smile.

You could even be eating your favorite meal, but it won't taste as palatable as it used to because your mind is full of fearful and negative thoughts. Even in the midst of a garden full of beautiful flowers, everything will be colorless to you. If you find yourself living your life this way, you need to start practicing mindfulness. This practice will help you focus on the positives and find reasons to be happy in the

midst of challenges. If you don't live in the moment, you cannot leverage the power of visualization.



Expectation of Positive Results

Life is full of sad days that come when you least expect them. Sometimes, you don't experience a negative situation directly, but you are sad all the same because the people you love are going through hard times. If care isn't taken, you can become so used to experiencing unpleasant situations that you start expecting them to happen. You shouldn't get to that point. Don't in the name of realism become a pessimist.

When you don't expect good things to happen to you, it will affect your visualization. You'll not be able to imagine yourself achieving monumental success. Instead, you'll be afraid that something might go wrong somewhere. Indeed, life can be unpredictable. Nonetheless, there are still many people that are able to achieve their dreams. Who says you can't achieve similar success? Reconfigure your mind to expect good things. It will affect your drive and motivation to accomplish substantial success.

Positive Affirmations

Your affirmations direct your mind and your actions. Avoid negative thoughts because they have a way of becoming self-fulfilling prophecies. You might end up convincing yourself that you're not good enough because of your negative thoughts and words. You might ruin your mood and confidence, thereby affecting your performance. Negative thoughts can ruin your relationships because people will not want to be around you when they perceive you as a negative person.

Negative affirmations can also ruin your career because they will make it obvious that you have low self-esteem. Meanwhile, when you are perceived as someone who is low in confidence, you'll not be trusted to handle things on behalf of others. You need to be deliberate about having positive thoughts about yourself. Positive affirmations help to eradicate and challenge self-sabotaging thoughts and actions. Interestingly, researchers have confirmed that when you spend just a few minutes thinking about your best qualities before a task, it improves your performance. This will come in handy when facing high-pressure interviews.

Gratitude

Gratitude is a culture you need to have, especially for the sake of your mental health. Life won't always give you what you want. However, you can choose to be happy all the same. In case you don't know, happiness is a choice. If you choose to look at the bright side of life, you will always find reasons to be happy and grateful. Gratitude is crucial, especially after you have lost something valuable. One of the reasons people are depressed after a setback is that they can't see any positive from the event.

It's natural that you won't be happy if you lose your job or a contract. However, that's not the end of your life. If you keep worrying about what you have lost, you'll never be able to take your time to visualize new possibilities. When people can't find positives after a failure, they lose hope. Meanwhile, hopelessness can be devastating. It's one of the reasons people take their lives.

Realism

It is a good attribute and attitude when you are relentless and will never give excuses for your failure. However, you need to be objective when setting goals and visualizing your future. For example, if your goal is to become the best ever in your field, you need to realize that you aren't the only person in the world that has such a dream. So, don't be a bad loser. The spotlight will never be on you all the time because the world doesn't revolve around you.

There will be days when others will do enough to deserve to win an award ahead of you. Don't become grumpy and disrespect them because of your obsession with

winning. Respect the effort of others when they deserve their success. You shouldn't become so competitive that you always feel that you are cheated whenever others are honored instead of you. Enjoy the spotlight when it is on you and celebrate others when it's not your turn. You'll only lose the respect of others when they realize that you're sad when they are more successful than you.

Contentment

Contentment doesn't mean that you don't have an intention to improve your current situation. It also doesn't mean that you aren't ambitious. In fact, you need to be contented to be able to suppress the overdrive and desperation that comes with being ambitious. Contentment is the feeling of satisfaction you have while working towards achieving your dream. When you are contented, achieving your dreams will not be what determines your worth. Rather, you'll have high self-esteem regardless of whether you achieve your targets or not.

You'll not put yourself under undue pressure. When you aren't contented, you'll not be realistic when setting goals. You'll set targets that aren't attainable within the timeframe you intend to achieve them. However, you won't realize that your targets are unrealistic because your desperation and low self-esteem are beclouding your judgment. You will treat anyone who tries to advise you to change your approach as an enemy. You'll never be able to distinguish between a destructive and constructive critic when you are blindfolded by ambitions.

Proactive Actions

When you are proactive, you'll act before something happens. In other words, you'll be able to identify a potential problem and provide solutions beforehand. Proactive people prioritize preventive measures over curative ones. Therefore, they hardly make mistakes or have issues solving severe problems. Being proactive helps your visualization because you'll be able to envisage situations before they occur. So, when creating imaginations about an event, you'll not be oblivious to the potential issues that can make your efforts futile.

Once you can recognize likely pitfalls on your journey, you'll be able to prepare for them or avoid them. When you need to ask questions from more experienced people, you'll do so. People who ask questions rarely make mistakes. They learn from others, and that helps them to avoid the same problems others faced because they were naïve and ignorant. Life is full of unprecedented situations that threaten to derail us. However, when you are proactive, you'll reduce the chances of landing yourself into unforeseen troubles.

Conclusion

We all know that life is full of uncertainties. Nonetheless, that doesn't mean that you shouldn't have dreams you intend to achieve. Your goals drive you toward your destination in life and give you a sense of purpose. One of the tools you need to reach that lofty height you desire is visualization. As you would have noticed, visualization is simple. However, it is tremendously effective in driving you to your dreams.

Stop listening to people with a negative and pessimistic view of life. Indeed, it's good to be cautious and be modest in your expectations. Nonetheless, there are many great examples of people who have achieved their dreams. Read more about such people, especially in your field. It resonates and is inspirational when you read about individuals who have defied the odds to achieve a goal that is similar to yours.

It gives you confidence that you can also do the same when you are ready to pay the price. Remember that dreams and visualization aren't enough to drive you to your paradise. You need to be determined and ready to put in the required hard work. However, visualization and industry aren't mutually exclusive. They are either side of a coin, and you need both. You are unstoppable! Chase your dreams and become the best version of yourself!