Five Universal Metaphors & Guided Visualizations That Accelerate the Change Process

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Why Stories and Metaphors?

- Access deeper part of the mind - Subconscious
- Emotional place where beliefs, feelings and patterns/behaviors are stored
- Not rational or analytical
- Works in Pictures (*Caveat*)
- Connects with Stories
- Subconscious is fast – useful when tight on time...
Why Universal Metaphors?

• Easy to learn
• Easy to tell
• Adaptable to different situations
• Loose... can tweak as you go
When to Use Universal Metaphors

- Decision making
- Clearing
- Adjusting self-perceptions
- Performance / Behavioral Changes
- Insight
- Looking towards to Future
- Repatterning
1. Two Path Progression

- Two Options / Decisions / Ways of Moving Forward
- Now is opportunity to chose future
- First Path – as is / less desirable / aversion option
- Move forward (appropriate timeline)
- Second Path – something different / more desirable / positive option
Basic Formula...

Timeline... (days, months, years)

“Aversion” → NOW → “Ideal”
Two Paths: To Remember

- Visualization vs Imagination
- Aversion (+/-) with Benefits
- Thoughts / Feelings / Behaviours
- Highlight CHOICES
- Future undecided...
- *When to use*...
2. Grey Room / Labels

• ‘Self Fulfilling Prophesy’ – living up or down to expectations

• Internalized words/concepts that are not supporting

• No need to carry/wear/connect... letting go...
Visualization Suggestions
Grey Room: To Remember

- Use client’s words (especially negatives) OR
- Just leave up to them
- May not be their fault, but now their responsibility
- Make sure they clear all (feeling?)
- ‘Nature abhors a vacuum’ – fill up with good
- *When to use...*
3. Storybook / Fairytale

• What do most tales have in common before the ‘happily ever after’?
• Create client as lead character, hero – rather than sidelined or victim
• Different way of looking at the past
• Draw lessons from experiences
Hero or Victim?
Storybook: To Remember

- Give Strength not Delusions
- Use general or specific heroes
- Introduction to forgiveness?
- Can draw insights?
- Heroic acts happen in the every day
- *When to use...*
4. Control Room

• ‘The Mind is Where the Action is, the Body is Where the Reaction is’

• Create place to adapt internal (mental, physical, emotional) functioning
What are Your Controls?
Control Room: To Remember

• ‘Optimal’ may be the goal (ideal vs happy)
• Provide help(er) where needed
• Great bedtime practice
• *When to use...*
5. Perfect Practice Room

- Practice DOESN’T make perfect!
- Muscle memory (mental, emotional)
- Holograph room
- Easier and easier
Perfect Practice: To Remember

• Feel / think / behave (all senses working together)
• Compound change – 15 + times
• Use ‘as if’ to reduce repetitions (without loss of effect)
• *When to use*...
Bonus: Shield / Rotten Tomatoes...

• External forces may undo change
• Create a ‘force-field’ to nurture shifts in thoughts, feelings and behaviors
• When?
Thank you and questions.

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Five Universal Metaphors / Guided Visualizations that Accelerate the Change Process

The Mind (Subconscious) works in Pictures and Stories...
Note, these ‘scripts’ are simply suggested foundations, from which to expand and adjust to your clients

**Two-Path Progression**

By coming here today you’ve made a choice, because change always requires a choice. You’ve chosen to _______________________ (whatever issue they’d like to work on). As you sit here you’ve begun a journey, and the first step of that journey is to choose your path.

Imagine yourself at a fork in the road. To the right is the road to ‘success’. The road to the left is the road you’ve followed in the past. It’s familiar to follow. That’s the road of doing the same things you have been doing: _______ [note patterns………………..]. When I count to 5 you’re going to go two years into the future, to 2014, (or to the important event in your future,) BUT, you will have chosen that road to the left, of _______

1-2-3-4-5, there you are after two more years of being out of control, (creating a ‘worst case scenario’ ______). You feel the weight of the disappointment in yourself. There is a mirror in front of you and you imagine yourself, and you ask yourself – Am I pleased with myself? How do you feel? ______ Healthier? Smarter?___ Better or worse? How do you feel about yourself? Feel the disappointment of letting yourself down by following this road. (This is a day you’ve waited for and anticipated and it’s shadowed by negative feelings about yourself (get into details of issue).

When I count back from 5 you’ll be back at the beginning of that road feeling much better, 5-4-3-2-1. And you feel better because none of that has happened nor does it have to. You have decided not to let that happen to you.

Once again I’m going to count to 5 and this time you’ll go two years into the future following the road to success (be at that same special day) as a much (positive descriptors)________ you, because you have made that choice to take back control / to change ________________, leaving the old, familiar road behind! You are already taking your first steps towards freedom and success on the road to the right.

1-2-3-4-5, there you are and as you imagine that mirror you feel so proud (alternative word)! Really feel _______ (all the positive feelings and concepts). Your attitude is positive – you’re feeling good and going to feel even better yet! You imagine yourself ______ (best case scenario). Imagine (additional benefits) ________. Really become aware of how good you feel for having taken control over your habits/patterns/feelings and your life.

Now as I count back from 5 you’re back at the beginning of that road, 5-4-3-2-1. Just be there with your eyes closed as you think about the two paths you can take...
Grey Room Technique

This is one of a number of techniques for clearing the client’s mind of general negative thoughts and emotional energies.

Now, ________, remaining comfortable, well, safe, simply find yourself in a comfortable, small and very pleasant grey-walled room. You are totally free of any uncomfortable feelings... you just feel welcomed, right at home, here. This room has a domed ceiling – the way an igloo might be inside, and you now sense that this grey-walled room is actually your own (subconscious) mind, the core of your being, the very centre of you.

You now notice that, clinging to the walls of this room – all over – are little bits of what appear to be paper. Some are dark and some are light.

Moving close to the wall, now, you sense that, stored on the dark bits of what appear to be paper, are all the negative thoughts and emotional energies, and feelings from all you past. Like (negative emotions)__________! All the negative, inhibiting, defeating, thoughts and emotional energies and feelings from your past are stored in this room of your subconscious mind, on these little dark bits of what appear to be paper.

Now, become aware of this. You can pull these dark bits of what appear to be paper down from the walls, you can crumple them in your hands until you hands are full, and you can take them over to where a hole, about 10 inches in diameter, has opened in the centre of the floor and pour them through that hole and watch them disappear into nothingness! So that these never come back again.

You can sense that, with several trips, gathering down handfuls and carrying them to the hole and pouring them through, you can clean all of the negative and emotional energies from your inner self. In a moment I want you to start working at it. I will sit quietly and wait until you are finished. When you are through, just let me know by saying “I’m done”. Ok, you can start now...

(if there are ones that ‘won’t come down’, you might need help...)

Now _____, notice that the light bits, the good, positive, energizing, helpful thoughts and emotional energies and feelings are expanding, growing to fill all the space left by the dark ones you disposed of... growing, expanding, until they fill the whole walls and ceiling with beautiful, positive light. Feel the positive energy, now, within yourself, as you notice that the hole in the floor has closed itself, and the entire atmosphere of the room is becoming light. Beautiful, pure, uplifting, energizing light. Feel it, going through every cell of your being. From this moment forward, moment by moment, minute by minute, hour by hour, day by day, the thoughts and emotional energies of your subconscious remain so positive, so calm, so stable... (positive suggestions – will last after the experience)
**Labels**

As you sit there with your eyes closed, I want you to realize a harmful thing that you have been doing to yourself. I want you to realize that you have been placing certain labels on yourself. Labels which are very harmful to you. Labels that you associate with (the problem at hand) ______. You have been giving yourself labels – labels such as (insert negative labels client has talked about)_____________. But every time you say these words to yourself, you increase your own belief that you are and do all these things.

For you see, the difficulty is that people tend to believe what they say about themselves. In other words, you are basically what you believe yourself to be. Now you see – that’s a really simple concept. It can work for good as well – if someone thinks that she has a great smile, she’ll be more likely to use it and with practice, almost anyone can have a nice smile. Or someone could say to himself that he’s good at making presentations or speeches, and so he’ll force himself to live up to that perception of himself.

When people place labels on themselves that are negative, however, it works the same way. After the negative label has been given, people need to live up to that label, or live down to it, as the case may be. For you realize that all their actions carry them toward the image that they hold of themselves. Now this is serious. And it is serious because it doesn’t take long to believe it once you have started the thought in motion. For once you have given yourself the suggestion that, for example, your self confidence is slipping, it’s just a step away from thinking, “I’m not worthy of anything really good happening to me.” Or “I don’t deserve any better breaks than have already come my way because of the way I am now or the way I have acted in the past.”

Well you know more about your past than anybody else, but you have been allowing your mind to play tricks on you. Playing tricks on you by letting you feel that your problems are too difficult to be resolved. But now you realize that these things are just labels as well – labels that are certainly not you. Just like a label on a bottle – while the label may say “perfume” or “poison”, the label itself may just be made out of paper, and has no similarity at all to the contents of the bottle. It’s just the same with the negative labels that you have placed on yourself.

Now we are going to discover your power of imagination and change that is within you. I’d like you to imagine a blackboard (or whiteboard) in front of you. On that board are all the labels that you have placed on yourself. Labels of ____________ and anything else that you have labeled yourself that I haven’t mentioned – include those other ones as well. Now imagine that you have an erasure or cloth in your hand. Take it and erase all of those negative, and incorrect labels from that board. I will be silent for a few moments so you can erase them all. … Now they are gone. They are no more.

Now I’d like you to take a chalk or pen and start writing new labels for yourself on the board. Labels of ability, confidence, self-assurance, focus, improvement__. You’re writing good labels down on the board because you are intelligent. You are capable, you are effective, you have the ability to overcome any obstacles in your life. I will be silent for a few minutes to give you time to write them down.
**Storybook / Fairytale**

I’d like you to use your powerful imagination right now. Imagine that you’re looking at a story book. Maybe you can remember some of your favorite story books, and as you begin to think about them, you realize that while they may have started “once upon a time”, and finished “happily ever after”, the middle bit is full of lots of action and adventure.

Usually in the story book there is a hero or heroine, the story is usually about that person, and the things they have to do, confront and learn to be the best hero they can be. Sometimes they may have to face ogres or dragons or evil machines or... (make relevant) – but it was these experiences that made the heroes so much better able to handle other things later on in the story, learn things they needed to know.

You are the hero of your own story, not a minor character, not the victim, but the hero. You may have had some chapters that were challenging (or even are challenging), but you can start a new chapter right now, and you are writing a new chapter now, because it really is YOUR story.

I’d like you to flip though the older chapters and as you do, you notice all of the lessons you’ve learned. Surprisingly you don’t feel any of negative emotions from these chapters that you might have felt in the past because you realize that it was part of the story that makes you able to write your new chapter as a hero. You may even feel a little sorry for some of the people in your past, because they are stuck as limited characters in your story (concepts of letting go or forgiveness may be helpful).

I’d like you to imagine taking a peek into the next chapter of your story, and the good shifts/changes/differences that you’ve decided on. Imagine them, feel them... this is your story, your heroic chapter. You may understand better what you need to do... and enjoy this new unfolding of your story...

**Control Room**

I’d like you to image a door – on the door are two words – Control and Room. This is the control room to your mind and body. Most people don’t realize that they have control over their mind and body but now you do. And in the control room you can make changes you need and want for better ___ (or change ______).

In a moment I’m going to count from one to three and you’ll open the door and go into your control room. Realize that just as everyone is different, every control room is different. Sometimes people say that the control room looks like the control room of a space ship or a factory – with lights, switches, levers and gauges – yours might look different however.

One.. two... getting ready... three... open the door and step inside. And inside you can see an area controlling your eyes, your ears, your skin, there’s a place for the central processes of your body, there’s an area for your emotions. There’s place for your relationships, your work/study/sports/home life.

Now go over to (an area they want to work on). In this area you might notice that things are a little amiss, that there may be some fixing that needs to be done, some changes made, optimized. Well, you have all the tools you need in your control room (depending on the individual, you can guide them to a ‘tool box’ so they can metaphorically fix the problem). You also have a helper in the control room – an engineer – and now that you know you have the control room, you can give your engineer directions.
• Check to see that there’s something to be fixed (you can guide specifically if talked about before)
• Make sure that the changes are made
• Highlight that this is like an organic computer, that there will be positive changes in other areas because of a change in one area
• Make sure that you touch on optimizing emotions as well

Once they have made changes in their control room and are ready to go, “you can always come back to your control room whenever you need or want – the easiest time is just before sleep or just as you’re waking up in the morning – you can make these positive shifts because the control room is in your control.”

**Perfect Practice**

There is a difference between practice and perfect practice.

• Practice makes permanent.
• Perfect Practice makes perfect.
• And you can practice perfectly in your mind.

**Aspects to perfect practice:**

• Become aware during practice: body position; muscles tense/stressed – focus on FEELING
• Imagine from the outside (spectator) – using perfect technique
• Imagine from the inside – eyes focused outward while executing skill
• Do you need awareness of surroundings? Include if necessary
• Imagine PERFECT technique – rhythm, tempo, timing...
• Image entire performance – pre-event to successful completion; include situations, disturbances, ‘distractions’, mistakes (with options for overcoming these)
• Correct mistakes – redo immediately
• Include a key/cue word – simple “I can”, “nice”, “focus”
• Prepare for unexpected – for example, with sports - weather, “bad calls”, equipment failure, technical problems, other
• Reinforce – compound 15 times or more
• Positive only

**Perfect Practice Room:**

Image a room where you can practice any aspect of (your sport, writing an exam with confidence, speaking in front of others, ________) that you wish. This is your perfect practice room. While you know that practice makes permanent, perfect practice makes perfect and you can certainly practice perfectly within your mind, and now you can do it in your perfect practice room. The room may seem to disappear as you can now be wherever you wish (“be there”) You can slow things down or speed them up, rewind to review or improve, and practice dozens of times so that your muscle memory and the good feelings associated with it will be imprinted within you.
Protective Shield (negativity and distractions)

Give client a protective shield, like the ones in TV space shows, or ‘Teflon’ so that negative words and actions can roll off - you can give them this shield that will help them to be protected from the power of these ‘sticks and stones’ thrown verbally. This protective shield can also reduce distractions, or it may stop any negative words from others... create the powers of the protective shield as needed.

The Duck

Have you ever seen a duck? You know that ducks can swim? (wait for answer or help...) Can chickens swim?... That’s right ducks can swim but chickens can’t swim. And let me tell you why. You see, ducks don’t get wet, so mostly they stay dry – that’s why they can float in the rain. But if you threw a chicken in a tub, she’d get wet and would sink, so promise me you won’t try that experiment with a chicken...

Now more about ducks. You see ducks have this protective coating on them that stops the water from wetting their feathers, that’s why they can swim in the rain and still keep dry. Pretty nice, right?

Well, you’re going to get a protective coating just like the one the duck has. Now if anyone says or does anything that would hurt you or make you feel bad, well, those words and actions are just going to bounce off. Now if anyone says or does something to hurt you or make you feel bad, you know that they’ve got the problem. You’re fine, you’re ok. And now you have this protective coating. It’s made out of truth and the truth about you is that there’s nothing wrong with you, there never was, so you can always feel good about yourself, no matter what’s going on around you. Feels nice?

So from now on, you’re going to wear your protective coating all the time, just like the duck wears his protective coating all the time. You’re not like a chicken, but a duck so nothing can ever sink you. You just swim and float and have a good time no matter what’s going on around. How does that feel?

Rotten Tomatoes

“If I threw you a computer game, basket ball, present (whatever the client likes), would you try to catch it?” – Answer will probably be yes.

“If I threw you a disgusting, rotting tomato, would you try to catch it?” – Usually with a lot of faces, your client will say no.

“Whenever we catch and hold on to something nasty that others say, do or imply, it’s like we’re grabbing a rotting tomato. The one thing to remember, though, is that the rotting tomato isn’t ours, it may belong to the person who threw it. So we have a choice to grab it or drop it!”

Understanding that we don’t have to take in or on the negativity of others makes it easier to let go. Most of the time, as we look back on situations in the past, it wasn’t such a big deal, but the more we hold on to hurts or injuries, the bigger they get. Being able to let go of the little things promotes the ability to rise above the flinging tomatoes in life.

Contact with any questions or thoughts! “Like” us at www.facebook.com/GreyMatterNetwork