

Guided Imagery as a Companion to SoulCollage®

with Glenda Cedarleaf MSW LCSW

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SoulCollage® and Guided Imagery:

Call us to a deeper reflective state where we can access the transpersonal

They each involve the process of accessing and dialoging with images

They help us tune into our inner voice

They both help us reconnect with aspects of ourselves that may have been lost through trauma. This reconnection takes us into profound opportunities for healing.



Guided Imagery, Guided Meditation, Hypnotherapy all help us access the theta brainwave state. It is in this relaxed state that we are more receptive to the wisdom that arises from our unconscious creative mind. **Belleruth Naparstek** –a pioneer in Guided Imagery and one of my mentors defines Guided imagery as "an immersive hypnotic intervention. It consists of calming words, soothing music and positive images designed to structure a relaxing, healing experience that targets specific health outcomes," It can be spoken one-on-one by a practitioner, presented in a group, or self-administered by a recording. She cites the many types of imagery that we can use. Here are 7 of those categories:

Feeling State Imagery focuses on changing mood-- such as seeing yourself in your favorite place, or recalling a happy, peaceful time. Any imagery that can genuinely elicit feelings of love, care, safety and gratitude, help release feelings of fear, anxiety, resentment and anger.

End State Imagery explores and reinforces any desired outcome or goal, so, for example, I have clients that want to lose weight, or quit smoking. The imagery incorporates these outcomes. We are focusing on replacement behaviors, an image of seeing themselves healthy, fit etc.

Energetic Imagery focuses on releasing stuck energy so the guidance is about flow, releasing, feeling a sense of empowered or relaxed movement. The companion suit is a good example of energetic imagery as we connect with our instinctual nature, animal companions, the chakras.

Cellular Imagery focuses on the healthy interaction of the cells, so for example, when someone imagines their immune cells functioning like packman—gobbling up the cancer cells. The more specific this imagery, the better and so it requires some technical knowledge about our biology.

Metaphoric Imagery incorporates symbols instead of physical reality. A good example of this type of imagery would be imagining the heart opening like a flower, or the creative energy unfolding like a flower or feeling a sense of freedom in the image of a bird soaring.

Psychological Imagery offers a lens through which to see a challenge that focuses on healing, or being loved and connected. For someone who is grieving perhaps the imagery is of reconnecting with the presence and caring of a lost loved one. Our committee and community suits often include psychological imagery.

Spiritual Imagery focuses on the transpersonal, the mystical, the connection with our council, our source, angels, guides, spiritual symbols etc. a sense of oneness. The council and transpersonal suit are good examples of spiritual imagery.

Guided Imagery stimulates the vagus nerve which deepens the calming response. According to Belleruth, Guided Imagery is the “lazy man’s version of meditation” because it is so easy to learn and practice. It is a powerful self soothing tool that creates a foundation for healing.”

When we are in a trance or altered state we are more open to our intuition and creativity, When we relax on purpose, amazing things unfold: Breathing slows down and muscles become relaxed. We are less aware of external stimuli and more in tune with our emotions and body sensations. We feel a sense of distance from where we are and less aware of the passage of time. Our brainwave activity and biochemistry change, as we take a metaphorical journey into our imagination.

Customized Meditation Audios

To listen to imagery that is specific to you can be a very powerful meditative experience. You choose the background ambient music, the inspirational quotes, the affirmations that address your current challenges, the characteristics of your unique healing place.

I began creating customized meditation audios in 1994 and have recorded thousands since then. It is an amazing tool for reconnecting with what is specifically relaxing, inspiring, empowering and healing for you. Here is the template of questions I use when creating customized meditation audios. You might want to use this as a guide for how you would like to create and record your own audio.

1. Your healing place- (can be an actual memory or a fantasy--just make sure you have no negative associations with it.) Include 1-3 of each sense: visual, auditory, olfactory. What does it look like, sound like, smell like? Where would you be sitting or lying when in this healing place (i.e. on the sand, in a chair, floating, etc)?
2. A word you would like to include (optional) for your spiritual connection (i.e. God, spirit, love etc..)
3. 1-2 Empowering memories /empowering experiences. (What we are looking for is a visceral reference/reminder of feeling strong in your body mind and spirit) It is okay to use 1 or 2 memories or experiences. Just a couple sentence description of this memory/experience. What color do you think of when you are aware of this memory or experience?
4. Mentor: The first name (s) of someone you admire and list 3-4 of their qualities. Or list a few of your neters that are especially meaningful to you in your life.
5. First list the 3-5 most negative things you are saying to yourself and then imagine a wise and loving being hearing you say these thing. What would that wise and loving being say to you in response to these statements?
Transform this into positive affirmations. Begin with the word "I" and make the statement be in the present tense. You can then include these statements for your script.. (These are the statements you want to hear, that you want your unconscious to receive each time you listen to your audio.)
6. In addition to these affirmations is there anything else you would like to remind yourself of on a daily basis? Ie. Words to a song or prayer, or poem, affirmations, specific suggestions. Think of this as an open-ended opportunity to reinforce what you already know and want to remember at a deep level. Length: a few sentences to one page. Decide the amount based on how much you want to listen to--more than a page can be too much information and overwhelming to listen to. To explore more on affirmations, just google the word and you will find many ideas to adapt to your own needs.
7. Music Choose ambient music without words and with a slow pace.
8. How many minutes of music would you like after the script ends? 5, 10, 15, or 20 minutes?



About Glenda

I am a holistic psychotherapist and clinical hypnotherapist and guided imagery recording artist. I have been in the healing arts for over 35 years. My love for guided meditation and hypnotherapy began in 1994 and it has inspired and supported me ever since.

My advanced training in guided imagery, somatic healing and hypnotherapy is through: The Institute for Health Psychology, National Institute for the Clinical Application of Behavioral Medicine, Wellness Institute's Heart Centered Hypnotherapy, and the Academy of Guided Imagery.

My approach also incorporates the use of mindfulness practices in creating greater clarity and the ability to experience the gift of truly living in the present.

Some of my teachers have included:

Belleruth Naparstek LICSW, Emmett Miller MD, James Spira PhD, Steve Gilligan PhD, Peter Levine, MD and Bessel van der Kolk, MD.

I currently have a private practice seeing clients in office in North Carolina and virtually worldwide. I have also trained as a life coach with Kathleen Brehony PhD through the National Institute for the Clinical Application of Behavioral Medicine.

I am a clinical member of:

[The Wellness Institute's Heart Centered Hypnotherapy](#) and [Imagery International](#)

In addition, I am a trained [SoulCollage®](#) facilitator.

My library of over 60 guided meditations are featured here:

www.GlendaCedarleaf.Bandcamp.com

www.HavenOfRelaxation.com

[GuidedMind app](#)

[Insight Timer app](#)



My recently created deck of 54 Meditation Cards has beautiful images, inspiring quotes and excerpt from each corresponding meditation.

These cards have been purchased to use as gifts for clients and loved ones.

Here is a selection of some of my meditations that are especially relevant for SoulCollage®

New SoulCollage® Meditations!

A Meditation Invocation for the SoulCollage® Experience
Exploring the SoulCollage® Suits in your “Cottage of Creativity”

General Meditation Relaxation

- Finding Your Healing Place
- Your Peaceful Interlude
- River of Relaxation
- Mindful Morning Meditation
- Wash Away: Affirmations for Letting Go
- Sacred Flute: Meditations for Letting Go
- Bathtub Bliss

Preparing

- Creating an Intention
- Envisioning
- Beginning Again
- HeartBeat Meditation with Rumi

Companion Suit

- Connecting with Your Animal Companion
- Journey Through the Chakras

Council Suit

- Connecting with Your Guardian Angel
- Connecting with Your Wise Woman
- Mermaid Magic Guided Journey
- Guardian Meditation

Community Suit

- Connecting with Your Circle of Support

Committee Suit

- Imagery to Meet Your Magical Child
- Inner Child Magical Journey
- Imagery to meet your Wise Woman

Death & Dying

- Peaceful Transitions

With gratitude...Namaste!

Glenda