

IHVS: Part 2 of 3: Connecting With Your Vision

Transcript

Jane: The important thing for you to remember about the next session, which is my vision, the ideal me, this is where you are basically going to write a love letter to the person that you see yourself being, the person that you want to be. But the important thing is when I say that the person you want to be, that you can write this in the present.

The reason for this is it's easier to project yourself into a new you when you are saying it in the now. In other words when you are saying things like "I am" then you can become more engaged in the process. It's more exciting; it seems more possible when you imagine the changes already occurring in your life.

Dr. Ritamarie: Your subconscious is a big part of this because it will hear you say, "I am."

Jane: Let me take it a little bit further. What I mean by that is that too frequently we are moving through the day with a lot of self-judgment filtering going on. Things like 'oh I'm not doing enough', 'oh I'm looking old and fat', and 'oh I can't get involved in a consistent exercise program, I'm too busy right now.'

This consistent description of ourselves is playing out, but it's hardly inspirational. When you look at the way you self talk during the day, ask yourself if that's really the kind of person you would want to get to know, that you would be drawn to.

In the process of doing this we are remembering that we are all more than our limiting self talk, more than that limiting self image, that we are also this becoming person. If you don't write it out then you can lose track of who is that person you love, who is that person inside of you that you love so deeply?

Basically with this exercise we are beginning to flex a more positive muscle in our way of thinking about ourselves.

All that's really involved in this is, you can use the paper in the handout or, if you prefer, you can do what I've done in the past. Get yourself a special notebook and let this be an ongoing exercise. You can always come back and fill in more at any time.

But with 'my vision' 'the ideal me' you may not know what to say at first. Don't let that stop you. Just pick up the pencil, put the pencil to the paper and begin writing even if it's nothing more than "I don't have a clue what to say about what my vision is of myself" that I'm kind of thinking to keep going. If you do know what to say just start with that and just keep going.

I guarantee you it's going to begin to flow. Write in the present tense and write about the way you see yourself. Write about how you look. Write about how you feel. Write about how you interact with life, with your environment, with the people around you. Write about the way you hold your body, the way you move, the way it feels to dance.

Write about any and everything. You'll find that you are breaking these down into paragraphs addressing different issues, or you might find that it's all free flowing. However it is for you, it's perfect, just keep going with it. You are going to want to stay in the present moment and not be judging or comparing during this.

It's something that Dr. Ritamarie has reminded me about saying "I dance more frequently." Don't even worry with the 'more' or 'less' just say "I love dancing" and go from there, talking about how it feels and your partner; being fed by the music or whatever makes you engage all of your senses.

That's a very quick little summary What I will tell you is this: as hard as this exercise might seem to get started, most people who share with me their feedback on this particular exercise say "You know, I thought it was going to be hard to get started, I didn't know what I would write but then I found that it was almost hard to stop because I really loved doing it."

I'm going to give you a very quick example from some that I did this week. "I am vibrant, toned, drawn, flexible, healthy, glowing skin that's elastic." "I shine brightly exuding love, compassion, intellect and energy." "I seem always to be smiling with relaxed, happy facial muscles, posture is erect and suggest a new youthfulness."

"Movement is without hesitation, it's intentional; it's erect and fluid." So this is a time when you want to pull out all the descriptive images you can possibly come up with for yourself and love it, enjoy it.

Obviously you are not going to be able to write your entire image right now. Let's do the same thing, where we are taking about five minutes, and think about one thing about yourself, and see how deep you can take that in writing about it. Then you can always incorporate it into this exercise on your own later. So I'll give you a few moments to do that.

Dr. Ritamarie: One thing to keep in mind as you are doing that, don't limit yourself. Just feel like the sky is the limit and don't judge yourself.

Put everything out there that this is the ideal you, this is the you that really does live inside of you and is sometimes held back by some of the day to day stuff. So just let everything go.

Jane: That's true, you don't have to worry about someone saying well 'this isn't who you are' because this is who you are. It's coming from you and nobody else will be reading this unless you wish to share it.

Dr. Ritamarie: Great. Remember to do the breathing. Focus your attention on your heart space and do some nice breathing to really get yourself in touch with that.

Jane: You may be sitting at your computer now but what you may want to do when you work this exercise on your own, is to go to your favorite spot whether it's under a tree or a back porch swing, or propped up in your bed, pamper yourself in the process. Would you like to give an example from your own?

Dr. Ritamarie: Yes, I can do that. This is my ideal stuff. I'm just doing this out of my head because I haven't written it down in a while or I don't have access to where I wrote it down more recently. "My body is strong, it's healthy, it's limber. I am comfortable in my body, all my joints move with ease and grace."

"I am feeling a sense of compassion and love for everyone that I come into contact with. And my voice and my tones and my words all reflect that consistently, consistently." That's a good starting point.

Jane: Yeah, that's wonderful. You may find that you start out talking about how you interact with people, or you may talk about feeling free and what that feels like for you; whether you felt free of financial concerns or free of relationship issues or whatever.

It can even be how you eat. You could go on forever, write several paragraphs about how you eat and how you enjoy your food and how it feels so healthy and life giving when you are putting it in your mouth. Remember the more sensory words and the more descriptive words that you put into this, the more alive it's going to become for you.

Always keep this handy, re-read it. Remind yourself this is another part of who you are it's like a 'becoming' you. And add to it, add to it as often as you like. I'll tell you very quickly that I did a version of this exercise in the 1970's. I was a young mother with several children and living in a small house I owned.

I envisioned a different life down to the way clothes moved on me and where we were living, and so forth. Seemingly out of the blue, against all odds, my whole situation changed for me. It's not like I had even intended that, I was just doing it to relieve myself from the stress of where I was, and I accidentally created a whole new situation.

Dr. Ritamarie: It's not like you create things; you think it and then it suddenly happens. What happens is, when you create that vision, it creates inspired action. What I mean by inspired action is, that even if it's not in conscious forefront, when that image, that vision, is all inside of you and it becomes part of you, you start to take actions that are consistent with bringing those things closer to you, whether you realize it or not.

Jane: Exactly. That's exactly how it works because suddenly I was throwing open doors and saying "Why not? Show me how do I do that," and then you'll start acting accordingly.

Dr. Ritamarie: I'll leave you with a couple of other little tidbits. Jane already mentioned avoid the comparative word. "I'm more energetic." More energetic than what? What does that mean? Be really specific, "I'm energetic enough to climb up and down a flight of stairs without getting winded" "to ride my bicycle for three miles" or "to hike at a specific trail" that maybe you like to hike.

Be really specific about it and avoid the comparisons. Also be positive, say "I choose to treat people respectfully" instead of saying something like "I'm not angry and disrespectful anymore." They are different. When you say it in that positive way, you're creating this vision, this action in your subconscious and your nervous system says 'oh this is already there' and it starts acting 'as if.'

You start to act 'as if' you are a strong, vibrant, limber person. And what does strong vibrant limber do? Well they do certain activities in certain ways, and you believe that you are, that's when you start to act 'as if.' You'll be amazed and surprised at how this works.

The last piece of it is really just an extension of the second one but it's getting more specific. In the first one you are doing a brain dump, you are just going with whatever comes to you, and it's very organic. The next one is a little more specific in the way of guidelines.

For example, you are going to remember what it is that you value the most and then you are going to go through your body, but not just your body, your being; piece by piece because there are all different pieces of you.

We have laid out eight different aspects and you might be able to find more about your body image and appearance, your diet, your fitness and your exercise, your mindset and your attitudes, your home life, your work life, your social life, your self-esteem and your personal growth.

Those are the categories we've laid out. But we also left room in there for you to add some extras of your own if there are some that we didn't cover that are very near and dear to you. What we are asking you to do is to pull out the chart for say body image and appearance. First of all you really need to focus on what's right, right now.

Right now, in this point of time, what's right about that? When you do you will be surprised with how many things you come up with that you were ignoring and how much better you feel, how good you feel, about yourself. So the first step is positive aspects and what I'm grateful for.

What am I grateful for about my body image and my appearance? And you look at yourself in the mirror and you notice your eyes. I love the green in my eyes, or the sparkle in my eyes, or I love this little dimple when I smile, and you think about all those little things about yourself, in your body image and appearance, that you really like.

The second column is 'what's my vision, what am I moving towards?' That's where, similar to the first exercise is my busy image and appearance, "what am I moving towards?" "I am becoming lean and trim, my hair is shining and my skin is smooth," and that sort of stuff that you can all lay out there. Then what do I need to achieve these goals?

If currently the slim and trim is there and you've got an extra 20, 30 pounds it's plan my eating and my movement activities so that the weight drops away from me, the weight melts away from me. Isn't that a nice word? Because melt it's so easy.

It just happens as opposed to dropping or moving or all that. Melting away, the weight melts. You write a list of what you think you need to achieve those goals. What's the positive impact of you realizing this vision, not just for yourself but also for others?

If being stronger means that you you're more able to engage in activities and you're able to exercise more, then you're able to go on a trip that you haven't been able to go on. I have to share this. I just got a great postcard today from a patient I've been working with, and it's a beautiful picture of this exotic place in Africa.

I can't remember the name of the place. But she is climbing. This is a trip she's wanted to do for many years but didn't have the energy to do it. When I first met with her, it was just about a year ago and we went through this and one of her things was "I'm going to be strong enough to be able to take this trip and be able to carry my camera equipment and take photos" and we worked through that.

We got her there little by little and she just wrote me a card today, "I'm here and thank you so much for helping me to get well enough to be able to be doing this." Now the beauty of this is that she had that vision; it was very specific. I need to be strong enough to be able to carry my camera equipment because I'm not going all the way up that mountain without being able to take pictures.

She focused on it, she attained it, and she kept that vision. It was a really powerful vision. When she came home from work at night and she had that vision, she kept her camera bag near the door. Instead of going and laying on the couch she would take her camera bag and go for a walk and start to take pictures and practice carrying that camera bag and build up her exercise and her esteem, even though it was easier to just pop on the couch after a tough day at work.

This is all within your grasp and it may seem like it's very tedious to break this down part by part; my body image, my diet, my fitness, and my exercise. But when you do this, and you create a list of what's positive now and what you are moving towards, and you really identify what it is you need to be able to identify those goals, that's what we said in the beginning part where I said "the vision creates the inspired action."

We are going to take it to another step. We're going to give it some extra oomph. We are going to actually sit down and reflect on this. You may decide to just pick one of these pages up a day, and that's what I would encourage you to do. Just pick one a day and work on it even if it takes you two or three weeks to get through it. This is an exercise that will carry you through a lifetime.

Jane:

And it's another one that you can always come back to and continue to build upon it.

Dr. Ritamarie: Build upon because you can come back to it and say "oh I've reached that one already, I've reached that one already, now what I'm really moving towards is this one."

Jane: I'd like to say something about some of these columns too. Of course the first one, the positive aspects that you talked about, and the vision you are moving towards. But one of the things that I really appreciate the most about this chart is the column 'what do I need to achieve these goals?'

The vision creates the inspired action and from there you are able to really create. 'Okay, what exactly do I need to do?' If you want to improve posture and flexibility it may be 'what do I need to achieve?' That may be looking at exploring yoga centers, or checking out some posture exercises.

Maybe it's: 'if exercise is part of it, I need to do is put air in the tires of my bicycle.' Write out those details. If it's somebody you need to contact, if it's something you need to explore, if it's another sub action you need to take, write it all out there because there is your action plan.

Dr. Ritamarie: That's great. And it's really great to have inspiration. I got re-inspired about my exercise. I love my exercise but I haven't been quite engaging in the heavy duty weight lifting that I was before and I'm noticing it. I'm noticing I don't have the same tone or the same strength that I had when I was doing it more regularly three or four times a week.

I met somebody at a party and he had written a book on vegan bodybuilding and it was beautiful. I bought a copy of his book and these beautiful pictures. Very inspiring for me, and it sounds kind of weird, but I always wanted to have these really sculpted muscles and I can do it for a while but I don't stick with it.

Having to see that and to go through that and having a plan. I'm going to have to sit down and say what I need to get there, how many times a week do I need to work on my biceps and how many times a week do I need to work on my calf muscles or whatever to get to be that fit, and it's really inspiring.

Jane: Before we open up for final questions and comments, do you want to say anything about the last column and particularly the positive impact on self and others?

Dr. Ritamarie: I mentioned it briefly but I think it's really important because a lot of times when we sit down and we engage in a process like this, we may have the

tendency to label ourselves as being selfish. This is all about you being tuned into what are the positive things for you; it's really huge.

When you do that it brings you into that ever present state, and that brings your system out of the nervous, stressed out, hyper-adrenal kind of state that a lot of us get into; into a state that's more introspective and calm and much more capable of creating the ease and calm in your life.

The other thing is, when you achieve some of these things, it's really neat to start thinking about 'How would this affect other people?' 'How would it affect my children if I am more comfortable in my body?' Well I'm certainly going to be less irritable.

Maybe I'm going to be more patient with them, and I might be able to spend more time playing around with them, and rolling with them or taking them to the playground or doing activities with them. How is it going to affect my relationship with my partner? Or, if I don't have a partner, how is that going to affect my ability to attract a partner?

How is it going to affect my relationship with my mom or how is it going to affect me at work? All of the things we do have such a widespread impact on everything and everyone around us. I believe it is really important to get in touch with that because when you get in touch with that it gives you a bigger 'why.'

It's not just about me; it's a bigger 'why' and when you create a really big 'why' the 'how' just kind of presents itself. Now if your 'why' is big enough, your 'how' is just going to hit you in the face; it's going to be right there because you are really engaged.

Jane: Absolutely. It's almost as if, when you're thinking about realizing your goal and you're so filled with the joy and the thankfulness of achieving this vision, and then being able to keep that moving and flowing, it helps it to grow, and sharing with those people that you do love.

How could you share it? Again I'm thinking about how you are going to express that gratitude, which helps you to visualize this person that you are becoming within a larger context within your environment.

Dr. Ritamarie: Let me say one thing in addition to what you just said. It sparked me to say you owe it to the people you love, to your society, the people you work with, to the world. You owe it to all those people to become this 'you' because as this 'you,' you are no longer hiding this brilliance. You are sharing your gifts and you are going to have a major impact.

When you think about it that way, if you are the altruistic person who is always giving and doing for other people, you owe it to those people to devote this time and this energy to you because it's going to create a you that's so much more present with those people and so much more giving and valuable to those people.

Jane: We already know that about all of you just from reading the feedback that we are getting.

Dr. Ritamarie: Yes, I just get goose bumps when I read the feedback. You guys are really getting in touch with this and going really deep with it and I really honor you for doing that and I feel so honored to be sharing that with you.