

A Review of Gwyneth Moss' Imagineering Technique

DVD from the EFT International Masterclass 2007

By Shelley Malka

"Gwyneth Moss demonstrates EFT 'Imagineering,' the introductory DVD window on the 2007 Masterclass Conference promises us, "using the image to declutter the body of emotional baggage and address chronic pain."

Relaxed and friendly in her navy and plum outfit, Gwyneth introduces EFT as a simple tool much like a needle and thread where an 8 year old can sew on a button while a skilled artisan may construct elaborate tapestries. At the most simple level, she reminds us, we use words to tune in emotion and tapping to clear it. But with some creativity and innovation we can greatly expand EFT's potential and develop our own techniques. And these techniques come from wherever you come from, Gwyneth says. Her background, besides her MA in physics, is hypnotherapy, NLP and Human Givens. So she's always thinking, "How do you tap with that?"

Imagineering represents a strikingly innovative approach to using EFT with physical ailments. "A physical symptom means we have only a partial consciousness in our awareness," Gwyneth says. "Using imagination we can access deeper consciousness and generate metaphorical reality. Then tapping on various aspects of this metaphorical reality results in the metaphor changing. And this translates into physical changes." A highly imaginative and original technique, Imagineering is used either for chronic physical issues or those that don't cause pain or visible signs. Together, therapist and client journey into the body where the ailment is located, allowing the imagination to bring up undiscovered emotional and sensory connections with the stuck symptom.

Imagineering is also terrific for getting a person in touch with her imagination: whether she's visual, auditory, kinesthetic, this technique uses the imagination to bridge the gap between our rational thinking and physical selves. While Gwyneth affirms that all types of imagination are equally valid, she requests for the demonstration someone specifically visual with a physical symptom that doesn't hurt *now*.

We meet Sue who begins to detail the when's and how's of her hip problem, but Gwyneth interrupts with her laser beam ability for accessing sensory specifics. "Don't give us the history," she says, ever-gentle. "Just tell us what it's like now. How is *that* hip different from *this* hip?" Well, she can't mount a bicycle or a horse, Sue says, and any movement opening her hip feels like the ball's stopping in the socket and like something's ripping if she tries to do it. Gwyneth asks her to make some movement on the chair to get that "stuck" feeling - something tangible to test at the end of the session.

While other EFT techniques might use this hip pain as a stepping stone or door to go in – to use Gary Craig's metaphor, Imagineering shows how "Imagination blossoms where consciousness softens." Gwyneth asks Sue to send her thinking mind on vacation. Then she invites her to imagine a small light on her fingertip which she might insert into her ear – "a publicly sanctioned orifice," Gwyneth says, delighting the audience.

"Now go with that light right inside your head and shine it around." This is the 'test run' on a body part that isn't affected by the symptom. It provides information about the client's type of imagination and helps the person relax, rather than have her jump directly into problem.

"Breathe in low and breathe out really slow." Gwyneth's voice is soft and low as she works to quieten Sue's thinking mind. Gwyneth gives her lots of time. "What was that like?" she asks, searching for visual, auditory or kinesthetic clues about Sue's imagination. Don't ask what a person hears or sees, Gwyneth advises, because you don't want to make assumptions about her imagination. Let her come up with the imagery.

Sue says the inside of her head is like cave diving ... very smooth...quiet... with an underground passage she can swim through. It feels safe and nice. With Sue more relaxed, Gwyneth asks how she might now get that light into her hip?

"Through my belly button," Sue says, as if it's the most obvious answer in the world, and off she goes exploring. Tears and shame come up...she doesn't know how it got there....it's about all the fat in the way.... She can't "get to" her hip. Tap, tap, tap.

After a few rounds, Gwyneth asks, "What was it like trying to get through the fat?" Some moments of silence.

"The bridge won't open," Sue replies. "I won't open it."

"Just stay with, *the bridge won't open*," Gwyneth says.

So now the imaginary light exits Sue's belly button and a whole lot of tapping ensues. "Even though I don't want to oil the bridge...it's that simple...it's stuck and I don't want to oil it ...it could lift if it had some oil.... But I don't want to oil it...and I accept myself...I want it unstuck but don't ask me to oil it." At this point, some fear comes up which Gwyneth doesn't deal with right now. "Just stay with *the bridge won't open*," she says. After the session, someone in the audience asks if she refrained intentionally or by chance from reacting immediately to Sue mentioning fear. With characteristic humility Gwyneth replies that it's all a question of Sue's deeper mind connecting to hers and that she's not really thinking whether she *should* do something or not...."So I can't really answer that question," she says.

However, when you analyze that sequence on the DVD, you see Gwyneth's complete control over the process, notwithstanding that she "just lets it flow." While Sue provides us with those evocative images – "the bridge won't open...I won't open it...I can if I force it..." Gwyneth doesn't encourage Sue's notion of "forcing," urging her rather to stay just with the bridge imagery: "it's too dry...the mechanism won't work." When Sue says, "I'm afraid...I don't have the courage to open it," Gwyneth again refuses to let her go there. "Your thinking mind is in the way," she says. "Just send it back on vacation and stay with the stuck bridge mechanism that doesn't have enough oil."

However, when Sue says, "It needs oiling and I don't want to oil it. I'm afraid to oil it..." Gwyneth replies, gently suggestive, "I'm afraid to oil it....because....?" The open-ended question.

"Then I'll have to cross that bridge."

"Ohhhhh." We are privy here to Gwyneth experiencing her own insight as now she immediately changes gear and returns Sue to the KC point. "Even though I don't want to cross that bridge for good reason...."

Something has clearly come up for Gwyneth as she "just lets it flow." She guides Sue with "the bridge is stuck for a good reason...part of me doesn't want to unstuck that bridge because it would be scary to cross it (note how she addresses the fear

here)...and when it's stuck I don't have to....good protective excuse...and I accept myself even though I've got an excuse." Lots of tapping on "my excuse" and "I can't cross the bridge because it's stuck....no one's oiled that damn bridge...and I'm not going to oil it...not my job to oil the bridge." And then, as if out of nowhere, Sue realizes, "it's a relationship...."

"It's a relationship..." Gwyneth repeats.

And it's not my job..."

"And it's not my job..."

And then, the ever-so-subtle dawning of cognitive shift "...it *is* my job."

Now Gwyneth takes Sue back in to her hip with the light. There's a beautiful place, Sue tells us, at the other side. With Gwyneth's guidance, Sue says, "I couldn't see that beautiful place so I put something scary there....that was just my imagination....and now I can see that it's rocky AND it's beautiful." Tap, tap, tap. "It's scary...because it's unknown...I haven't been there before....but it's beautiful...I haven't crossed that bridge yet...it's unknown and looks beautiful."

"What sort of beautiful?" Gwyneth asks, always on the lookout for sensory specifics.

"The sun is shining," Sue replies - eyes still closed. "Not the kind of place I've ever seen...inviting...unknown..." Then, "I know what it is....it's not the unknown...it's a healthy relationship...I've never been there before...."

So we have witnessed Gwyneth waiting, watching, listening, biding her time with Sue until she finds the piece in the process that can change or transform. And then she beams that healing laser into the heart.

And that is the answer to the what-about-Sue's-fear question from the audience.

The thinking mind, Gwyneth informs us, tells us how things should look or ought to look because our education has conditioned us that way. So we learn that 'oughts' and 'shoulds' are safe and that being good means following everyone else's 'oughts' and 'shoulds'. The problem is that this is how we learn to lose connections to our imaginations. We learn not to trust what comes from inside of us... "which very often *is* weird!" She laughs, good-naturedly. "Now with Imagineering, the minute you say, '*Pretend* there's a light on end of your finger,' you keep away from all those 'oughts' and 'shoulds'".

As with everything in EFT, healing isn't promised. But Imagineering encourages us to value our imaginations, thereby offering a person a deeper understanding of how her own body connects with her mind and emotions. "Even just understanding the link at a body level can be liberating," Gwyneth says, "giving us the specific language of the symptom in order to 'get' what the symptom wants or needs."

It's as if we're looking at the symptom from its point of view. Gwyneth explains that before journeying through a process such as this, we cannot 'speak' the language of the symptomatic body part so we try to shut it out and suppress it. But with Imagineering, "the message is in the symptom and every symptom is a metaphor. So now Sue can 'speak hip' and possibilities open up for lifestyle or relationship changes, the need for which may have been held in the ailing body part," Gwyneth says.

And, as Gwyneth demonstrates clearly, interpretation is always the prerogative of the client. "I simply take their imagery and reflect it or give it back. Then we find out what's changed. Then we find out more.... memories and other aspects come up but we always go back to the process." You don't even need clever reframes, she reminds us. She throws them in if they're accepted but really, tapping and imagination do the whole thing together.

This notion that "interpretation happens within the person" is perhaps under-emphasized in traditional therapies. "Resist the urge to interpret imagery," Gwyneth says, quoting Fritz Perls' dictum that interpretation is a therapeutic mistake. The client is her own interpreter. "I keep myself out of it even if I'm itching to interpret the ripe imagery," she says. And if the physical struggle releases, this suggests that a message was indeed being held there; that the hip was carrying the struggle.

"This is amazing," Sue says at the end of the session, demonstrating her 'open-hip' movement that is visibly better.

"Just close your eyes," Gwyneth says, "and with that hip I want you to imagine getting on a horse."

"That's *so much* easier," Sue says, describing how different the two visions of past and future are.

Gwyneth guides her through this process, too. "Focus on how it is and can be now."

"It's really easy."

"So now you can speak 'hip'," Gwyneth says. They both laugh. "And if you hear 'hip' again, you'll know how to interpret."

"And I'll deal with it immediately," Sue says.

An amazing commonality in all EFT techniques is how respectful of privacy the therapist can be. We as the audience feel a tangible sense of awe for the obvious transformation Sue has experienced and yet we know almost nothing about the content of that transformation. "Wonderful cognitive shifts happen and I don't have to know what all that means," Gwyneth tells us. "I'm just the guide dog managing the process, but the content belongs to her.... We can be very respectful as long as we don't interpret.... Just keep checking if things change."

And as we have seen, change they do.

This DVD demonstrates how Imagineering is one of the finest techniques to access the innate wisdom of the mind-body connection. Watching a DVD as opposed to a live therapy session allows us to re-watch sequences time and time again, to really get a feel for what Gwyneth does and how she uses this technique, even while she herself 'doesn't *know* what she's doing.' Witnessing her intuitive flowing through her obviously vast river of psychological understanding, we are left with a sense of elation and awe.

Anyone interested in mind-body therapies should watch this DVD, for if, as Gwyneth says in her introduction, EFT is the bridge between the talk, the energy and the body therapies, Imagineering is the bridge par excellence. Certainly all level EFT practitioners should study this DVD, especially Level 3, since Imagineering represents the next level up in awareness and creativity: the discovery and development of your own unique techniques. I