

Life Envisioning: - The River of Time

Before we begin this guided imagery process, we'd like to remind you that there is no right or wrong way to envision something. Indeed although the language we are using here involves the word 'sight,' there are a lot of different ways to see. Some people see through their feelings. For some it is sound that allows them to receive images. For still others it is smell and thought. Finally there are those who when they close their eyes actually see color images. No right. No wrong. Just do whatever works for you and allows you to follow along and benefit from the experience.

Our recommendation is to read through the process once, then put on a piece of soothing instrumental music, lean back in your chair and read through it again much slower allowing the words and images to be your guide. If you would like you can also ask someone you know to read it slowly through for you and you can close your eyes and see (experience) the memories and images from your past.

*So sit back now, sit back and relax
And allow your eyes to close
Take a deep breath and relax
Take another deep breath and relax even more
Allow the chair to support you,
Allow yourself to give up the weight of your body to it.
Give yourself permission to take a short journey
To peel back the layers of time still further.*

*Let's go back – deeper, further
Take a breath and relax
Get more and more comfortable*

*Give yourself permission here to go
Back in time to your earliest memories*

*That's right – to those very first memories
Give yourself permission to remember very early images -
Your mother and father, your brother and sisters,*

*your grandparents or those who served as your family
in the early part of your life
What were those earliest years like?*

*Where did you live?
What was the house or apartment
Like that you first lived in
Did you have your own room
Or share it with your parents, or brothers and sisters?
Were you an only child?
The Youngest?
Did you sometimes find yourself playing second fiddle
to an older brother or sister?
Or were you the oldest,
the way-shower and caretaker,
the one who was always responsible?
Were you the favorite
or the ignored?*

*Take a breath and relax.
Take a breath and allow the memories to surface.
Make friends with your past*

*And what are some of your early memories
of your mother and father, your grandparents,
your uncles and aunts.
Do you remember how they looked,
how they sounded?*

*Did you dress up in their clothes or pretend
you went off to work to do what they did?
Did you copy their speech or their manners?*

How did you learn to be the kind of man or woman you are?

*And what about outside your home?
Do you remember your early years at school?
What kind of little boy or girl were you?*

Do you remember your hopes and fear,

your disappointments and your dreams?

Just breath and relax

Just breath and allow your memories to surface.

*And what about the other children you knew –
the kids with odd nick names and funny faces.*

Kids with gangly bodies and awkward stances?

And what did you look like?

Were you pudgy or thin?

Were you comfortable or uncomfortable in your body?

And what were some of the things people said about you?

Criticisms and compliments?

*And what were the things you decided about yourself
as a result of these criticisms and compliments?*

Did you have a lot of friends or were you alone a lot?

Was there a first little boy or girl you had a crush on?

Do you remember their name?

*And as you got older, as your body changed,
how did you feel about growing up?*

Did you experience confusions, desires, conflicts?

Were you excited about life?

And what kind of young person were you becoming.

Did you have a special dream of what you wanted to be?

Were you following that dream or following the crowd?

Were you sought after or invisible?

*And what were the things you were told
you were supposed to be?*

*And did these things you were told
match your dreams or someone else's dreams
a father's, a mother's, a teacher's?*

*And as you got older did you follow your truth
or did you turn off the path somewhere?*

Proms, dates, graduation,

*college, the service,
your first real job?*

*What kind of person were you becoming?
What did you want?
Whose image were you living up to?*

*A first serious relationship
Engagement
Marriage
Children
A career path*

*Disappointments, satisfactions,
betrayals, achievements
Innocence lost
Sophistication gained*

Older still – closer to now.

*Breath and relax
Breath and allow the pieces of your past to emerge –
without judgment, without effort.*

*Think about this last year.
What kind of year has it been?
What kind of person have you been expressing?*

*How was this last year connected
with that little boy or girl who dreamed of being special,
of doing wonderful things?*

*And how about today?
What kind of person are you expressing today?
Whose images are you living up to?
Whose values are you practicing?
Whose dreams are you fulfilling?*

Do you like yourself?

Do you like the way you show up every day?

*Do you like what you do
and the way you are with the people in your world?*

Do you like the way you relate to yourself?

*And when you look in the mirror
whose eyes are you looking through
and what do you see?*

What kind of man or woman have you become?

What do you value?

What do you want?

*Breathe and relax
Breathe and let go*

Just allow yourself to answer a few more questions:

Am I living the life I want?

Have I become the kind of man or woman I am proud of?

Am I still willing to do what I can to live my dream?

*You are such a remarkable collection of wants
and habits, disappointments and desires,
achievements and opportunities.*

*Such a collection of memories and dreams,
compromises and achievements, failures and victories.*

You are all of this and more.

*You are all of the moments you still have to live,
to discover, to create, express and invent.*

So are you ready for what's next?

Are you willing to move beyond

the shoulds and the musts and the have to's of the past?

Are you ready to step outside the image of what you think

*you have to be and discover who you really are
and what is still possible for your to become?*

*Are you ready to look at your life
with new eyes, new hope, new openness?*

*If you are, notice that near at hand there is
a wonderful old, leather trunk
and that in your hand is a key.
When you open it, the trunk is well lined and empty.*

*So now slowly start putting your packets of memories
as well as all of those have to's and shoulds into it.
Pack away all of the expectations
and the rules you have gotten from others.
Put away your judgments and sense of limitation.*

*And notice that with each memory you put into the trunk
you feel a little lighter,
a little more relaxed and at ease.
A little more present.*

*Put all of your past into the trunk
and when the trunk is full, close it and lock it.
And notice that there is a kindly old porter
who comes to put the trunk away for you.
He is just going to store it for you for a while.
In fact, you can call for it whenever you want
to take some time to sift through the memories
and experiences of your past,
but right now, you do not need to be burdened
by all of that. You want to be lighter,
to see with new eyes
and meet your life with an open heart.*

*Yes, now you have other things to explore,
new visions, new possibilities, new stages
and options, new dreams.*

So take a few deep breath

*and let them out with sighs.
That's right. Breath and let go.
Breath and relax.
This is a new moment,
a fresh moment – filled with opportunity
and possibility,
an unrestricted future, full of promise.*

*It is a future you can shape
in any way you choose.*

*Breath and relax
Breath and allow*

*And now as I count from three to one –
allow yourself to come slowly back
into awareness of the room*

*3 - you are more aware of the room around you.
2 – you are more aware of the sounds and the feelings in your fingers and toes
1 – you are opening your eyes to a new world, a new sense of wonder and
awareness.*

Life Envisioning – A Journey Into The Present

With this information in mind, we invite you to take a short journey with us. All you have to do is to lean back in your chair, read these words through, close your eyes (if you choose) and take the described journey in your imagination. If you would prefer, just read along and with your eyes open, experience the process.

*So now take another deep breath
and then another and allow your body
to begin to relax into the chair.
Yes, allow the chair to be your ally
and to support you. Also become aware
of the floor beneath your chair and the ground
beneath the floor. You see, it is all a kind
of beneficial conspiracy all designed to
provide you with the opportunity to relax.*

*Breath and relax
Breath and let go*

Now in your mind's eye, call up the images of these two wheels, Wheel A that depicts your evaluation of where you are in each of these areas of your life today and Wheel B that holds an image of where you would like to be at the end of your life.

Feel the two shapes. Ask yourself, if these are indeed wheels, what kind of journey would I have if I had to travel on them? Would it be a smooth or bumpy ride? Would I enjoy the trip or would I have trouble even focusing on the country side as I pass through it.

Also ask yourself, is this the kind of ride I want? And if not, what am I prepared to do or say or think differently? And am I just saying this because I am doing this exercise or do I truly understand that this graphic represents a thumbnail picture of my life? Do I truly understand that I have a choice about the kind of ride I want to have in the Second Half of Life?

Now spend a moment or two in silence with yourself and feel into these questions and the possibilities you have ahead of you.

And when you are ready, please pay Attention to what you have learned and some of the implications.

