

What to Do When You Are Hitting the Wall — Ready for a Jump-Step Forward?

Some Case Studies Illustrating the Power of The *Transformative ReVisioning* Process *

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When we are hitting the wall at work or at home, what is to do? In such times it can feel almost impossible to break free from the imprisoning grip of whatever it is that “has” us.

Some people seek to escape through drink, drugs or denial, only to come back to a situation that has usually become worse than before. Some try harder, feeling even more intensely up against it, until it is either solved or they drop. A wiser approach is to “reframe” the situation, as in the old cliché about “turning a lemon into lemonade,” by transforming the threatening problem into an inviting opportunity. The trick is in being able to do this when needed.

Or, it may be that your life is relatively free from threatening problems, but you would like an inspiring new vision to challenge you in taking some type of transformative “jump-step” forward to what ever would be most fitting for the next phase of your life trajectory.

Whether “hitting the wall” or not, *Transformative ReVisioning* is an exceptionally swift and powerful way for a “jump-step” forward to emerge. It is an inquiry process that does indeed turn perception of a threatening problem into an inviting opportunity. But the really unique thing about this method is the ease with which it draws upon the innermost reaches of consciousness as a source of creative wisdom having extraordinarily practical usefulness in what is sometimes called the “real” world of hard knocks.

The First Application of Transformative ReVisioning

“Micki” was a teacher of special education for the gifted and talented in a well-known wealthy blue-collar suburb of Houston. She had a problem: Every Monday, after lunch, her schedule required her to teach an experiential learning session in the class-room of an elderly school teacher [we’ll call her Hanna], who seemed to go out of her way to belittle and to thwart what Micki was trying to do for the kids in Hanna’s class. Little did Micki know that she was about to become the first

* The background process of discovery of this process is appended at the end, below.

recipient of a new visionary process for dealing with seemingly intractable problems, one that would enable her to ascend to a “higher octave” of relationship with her “problem person,” Hanna.

Micki told me about the problem on a Sunday evening after we finished doing our preparation for the Sunday School class we would be co-teaching for adolescents the following week. Saying to me, “You have all these visionary consciousness tools you have been investigating,” Micki then asked, “Do you have anything in your tool kit that could help me? *I’m desperate!*”

I told her I had just finished designing a new visioning tool she might like to try. She agreed, and once into it, after describing feelings about the problem situation, Micki was able to intuitively visualize a symbolically accurate image for the way she saw the problem person: she saw a *prickly porcupine*. After answering a series of exploratory questions about the image and what it meant to her, she followed my suggestion to invite the energy of her Higher Self/Soul/Holy Spirit/God (whatever term she felt most comfortable with) to transform the symbol of the problem into the *highest level appropriate now!* As she watched it happen, the first image of the prickly porcupine magically transformed into a *cuddly teddy bear*. After answering a second set of exploratory questions about the image, she agreed to invite the new image to enter—first into her physical body (paying attention to all subtle sensations that occurred), then into her mind, heart and soul as an integrative flow of “new imprinting.”

After we finished the process, Micki immediately asked “What was that all about? How will it help the situation?” I intuitively responded, “Micki, don’t even think about it. Just wait and see what happens.”

Monday evening, after returning from work, Micki called me and said: “You won’t believe what happened today. Toward the end of lunch time, I was walking toward the class we talked about, dreading what would be waiting for me. But when I walked by the teacher’s lunch room, Hanna called out to me, saying, “Hi, Micki. Why don’t you come in and have a cup of coffee with me before class. And when I sat down, her whole attitude had changed. She was actually friendly to me!”

Transformative ReVisioning When Hitting the Wall

Since that first application almost two decades ago, I have guided this process for both individuals and groups in many different settings, and it still amazes me that only rarely does a person doing this process *not* get a transformed image that proves to be insightfully useful—even for people who say that they “can’t visualize.” This

is especially true for people who feel like they are stuck, “hitting the wall,” so to speak, unable to move forward, or even to strategically retreat. This seems to be a situation in which Transformative ReVisioning is extraordinarily well-suited—as an additional example may illustrate.

Roger, a young colleague of mine newly working as a marketing consultant, came to me with for help dealing with feelings of panic he was experiencing as he prepared to “cold-call” a potential client—someone who, although a friend, was highly placed in the organization and especially important to favorably impress regarding the services Roger wanted to offer.

As in the case study with Micki, recounted above, I asked Roger to let an image emerge that symbolized his inwardly-held picture of what he felt up against. His image was *a large bed of nails and spikes*, ready to impale him if he clutched and screwed up in the phone call. After exploring the various meanings that this image had for him, I asked Roger to “invite the energy of his Divine Soul or Higher Self to flow on, around and through the image of nails and spikes, and to transform it into the highest level appropriate for him now,” and to simply watch as it happens.

Roger soon began laughing, and telling me how the image turned into *a bouncing basketball*, which for him symbolized a playful game, done interactively with others. As things turned out, this metaphor turned out to be quite meaningful to Roger on two levels: first, it released him from his deep fear of painfully screwing up; but it also turned out to be a prophetic image of the playfully interactive—although also seriously productive—relationship that emerged between Roger and his client after the call was successfully made.

By way of conclusion, it should be emphasized that Transformative ReVisioning is but one of many useful techniques for reframing troubling situations into inviting opportunities. But I know of none that so quickly and easily draws on the hidden reserves of wisdom and consciousness that—though called by many different names—are available in all of us. And although the results of Transformative ReVisioning frequently seem almost like magic, the insights it produces must still be courageously applied in the “real world of hard knocks,” where things frequently don’t go as we might wish. By experiencing “the hit as a gift—which the Transformative ReVisioning process helps one to do—we are naturally led to deeper levels of understanding and higher levels of mastery in this awesome journey called life.

Helping Another Deal with the Pain of Divorce

The following case study sent to me by Jim Lee, one of the former students in the Visionary Futures course described above, many years after having done this course with me:

"I just had a most interesting experience with transformative revisioning. Last night at 10:30 p.m. I got a message at work from a secretary that I had for 5-6 years at American Express. I was sort of surprised to hear from her, but she was clearly distraught about some things going on in her life.

So, I called back today - found out that she is going through a divorce and was trying to avoid medication to keep her mind clear. She wanted to know if there was any sort of meditation that she could do to help balance her mind.

Thinking about this last night, it occurred to me that the transformative revisioning process might be good for her.

So, I went through the whole process with her. The headache and nausea disappeared and she felt relaxed. She started crying because she felt so good. I suggested that she carry the transformed image with her and bring it into her consciousness every time she needed it.

So...this was kind of interesting. I had never thought that I would end up using this process for crisis management, but it was good to have that tool on hand."

Thanks,

Jim Lee

Author's Bio:

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Transformative ReVisioning sessions can be done via long-distance telephone. Please write to oliver@olivermarkley.com or call 512-964-6224 for more information.

Appendix

Transformative ReVisioning is a process for self-therapy that I originally developed to solve a problem that emerged in my graduate course in Visionary Futures at the University of Houston-Clear Lake during the last two decades of the 20th Century (1980-2000). The problem was this: When students used a visionary futures-research tool called "Mental Time Travel" to experientially explore a wide range of long-range alternative future possibilities, they often tended to become rather upset and sometimes depressed by the gloomy futures they intuited as being most plausible

assuming a “Present Trends Extended” trajectory. [Please note, that now, in the first quarter of the 21st Century, these depressing prophetic intuitions are proving to be alarmingly accurate.]

Being a student of “depth psychology” (from whence the [Mental Time Travel](#) process has also come), I naturally set out to find a suitable “self-soothing” process that would allow the students to reframe how they saw these futures – not to block them out, but to see them differently, as with a different lens or frame of interpretation. Soon thereafter, I found what I was looking in *The Inner Guide Meditation: A Spiritual Technology for the 21st Century* (1988), by Edwin C. Steinbrecher. On page 69 of this book, Steinbrecher suggests that "If you find yourself in some hassle or painful life situation, ask your Guide to take you to the inner energy image that is causing the outer problem." The Transformative ReVisioning process is based on this suggestion.

Trying the process on myself worked fine, so I looked forward to trying it with my students for as a possible solution to the above problem. But as is sometimes said, “Funny things happen on the way to the future.” In this case, what happened was that before I could take it to my students, I met on a Sunday night with Dr. Michal Rosenberger, a gifted and talented education teacher with whom I taught Sunday School at a nearby church. The story of my sharing the process with her comprises the first case study opening the above narrative.