



Michael Noah Weiss

Innovation through Intuition

A Micro Course based on the Contemplative
Practice of the TRILOGOS Method to Foster
Innovative Ideas in R&D Processes

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Foreword

Innovation rarely follows a straight line. Often, the most transformative ideas do not emerge through deliberate analysis alone, but in moments of intuition—through images, dreams, or sudden flashes of insight. The history of science is rich with examples that arose when the mind was given space to wander beyond rational constraints. August Kekulé's finding of the benzene ring is just one of them, as we will see.

The interdisciplinary project Innovation through Intuition started as a Virtual Exchange course in 2024, as one of many of the EDUC alliance. It was jointly carried out by colleagues from the University of South-Eastern Norway and the University of Paris Nanterre, who set out to explore whether intuitive capacities can be cultivated and systematically applied within academic research and development. Drawing on the Trilogos Method—a contemplative practice developed by Linda Vera Roethlisberger (2006) that integrates rational, emotional, and spiritual dimensions of human existence—the project asked a simple but profound question: What is at stake in guided imagery experiences with regard to intuition as a resource for academic innovation?

Through several cycles of action research, scholars engaged in guided imagery exercises and shared their experiences and reflections in dialogue. The findings, presented at international conferences and published in a research article (Angeltun, Weiss, Helskog & Bloom, 2025), indicate that these practices foster more than just creative ideas. They reconnect researchers with their own sense of meaning and vocation, strengthen trust in their inner guidance, and open space for authentic integration of personal and professional identities. Intuition here is not a marginal or mystical by-product of research, but a vital dimension of scholarly work that can humanize academia by bringing creativity, spirituality, and existential reflection back into the heart of knowledge development.

The micro-course – as presented in this report – is one outcome of this project. Designed for students and researchers across disciplines, it offers a series of five guided imagery exercises and accompanying evaluation sheets that can be used individually or in groups (more on the exercises' specific topics and their didactical set-up can be found in the course introduction.) Grounded in contemporary contemplative research approaches – such as Contemplative Inquiry (Bai et al., 2025) and Mindful Action Research (Ward & Vernon-Hughes, 2016) – the course seeks to foster what has been called actionable knowledge

(Bradbury, 2025): insights that are not only inspiring but also directly translatable into one's ongoing academic or professional projects as well as into next steps of one's personal development.

Hence, the learning outcomes of this course reflect a dual focus on scholarly innovation and personal growth and they can be formulated as follows:

Knowledge:

- Participants will acquire a basic knowledge of the principles of contemplative practices and their potential impact on enhancing creativity and problem-solving abilities in scientific endeavors.
- Participants will gain understanding of the role of intuition in research and development processes.

Skills:

- Participants will learn how to employ intuitive thinking to generate "out of the box" ideas, that can lead to novel solutions in their research as well as in their personal development.
- Participants will cultivate communication skills and self-awareness, enabling them to articulate and exchange intuitive insights and perspectives in interdisciplinary teams.

Competence:

- Through contemplative practices, participants will learn to promote personal growth and resilience, thereby fostering an environment for sustained creativity and innovation.

This publication brings together the course introduction, the guided imageries, and the evaluation sheets in one accessible format, making it possible to engage with the course in a self-guided way. It is offered in the spirit of exploration and dialogue, inviting you to connect with your own intuitive potential and to integrate these insights into both your professional and personal life.

I hope that this course not only enriches your academic work but also supports you in discovering deeper sources of creativity, meaning, and resilience. In a time when universities are challenged to combine rigor with renewal, Innovation through Intuition proposes that trusting our inner images may be one of the most rigorous—and most human—acts of research we can undertake.

Michael Noah Weiss

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Abstract

Are you looking for new perspectives on your academic work? The micro-course *Innovation through Intuition* offers an innovative and academically grounded approach to developing fresh ideas for research, writing, and development projects—while supporting your personal growth as a scholar.

Scientific history is full of intuitive breakthroughs—like chemist August Kekulé’s discovery of the benzene ring through a waking dream. Intuition, when consciously engaged as a contemplative practice, can spark transformative insights and open up “out-of-the-box” approaches to seemingly stuck research projects.

This short course introduces such a contemplative practice in the form of five guided imagery exercises based on the Trilogos Method (Roethlisberger, 2012), which is rooted in the Human Potential Movement (Maslow, 1954; Huxley, 1945) and transpersonal psychology (Jung, 1959). Each exercise is available as both audio and text, accompanied by reflection sheets to help integrate insights into your academic work.

The course draws on contemporary contemplative research approaches such as Mindful Action Research (Ward & Vernon-Hughes, 2016) and Contemplative Inquiry (Bai et al., 2025), and is situated within the paradigm of Second-Person Contemplative Practices of Inquiry (Flanagan, 2025). It has been inspired by empirical studies showing that guided imagery can significantly enhance creativity, reduce stress, and improve self-awareness (Dreger, 2015; Palatinus, 2015; Höck, 2016).

Whether you are a student exploring your academic path or a researcher seeking renewal and innovation, this course invites you to connect with your intuitive potential—and turn insight into action.

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1 Introduction

by Michael Noah Weiss & Linda Vera Roethlisberger

General Information on the Course¹

When used wisely in research and development processes, intuition can lead to groundbreaking innovations, as demonstrated by the history of science. A prominent example of this is the chemist August Kekulé, who discovered the molecular structure of the benzene ring intuitively, in a waking dream. He was sitting by his fireplace, staring into the flames. Almost falling asleep, he suddenly had a lucid dream in which he saw a snake in the fire biting its own tail. In that moment, he realized that the structure of benzene had to be a ring. As this story of Kekulé shows, intuition enables "out of the box" insights to invigorate (potentially stagnant) research projects with new ideas and innovative approaches. Such insights can come to mind unexpectedly as a sudden flash of inspiration, or also through contemplative practices, not so unlike the waking dreaming of Kekulé.

The TRILOGOS Method, on which the micro course "Innovation through Intuition" is based on, represents such a spiritual, contemplative practice. Through the 5 imagery exercises of this course, participants may receive intuitive inspirations for their academic work or research projects in terms of next steps, innovative insights or concrete changes. Simultaneously, practicing the TRILOGOS Method regularly is likely to harmonize work-life balance and foster personal growth, as evidenced by [psychological studies conducted at the University of Vienna](#).

Thus, the present course fosters what could be called *actionable knowledge* (Bradbury, 2025). As such it can be understood as a form of *Mindful Action Research* (Flanagan, 2025), an approach of *Contemplative Inquiry* (Bai et al, 2025) or a variant of *Cooperative Inquiry* (Sohmer, 2025).

¹ Since this author(s) of this report are not native-speakers, the entire text has been language corrected and proof-read by AI.

No prior knowledge is required in order to participate in this micro course, but participants should have a basic interest in meditation, contemplative practices and spirituality. There are **three ways to engage with this course**, depending on your context and preferences:

1. **In a team working on a common project** – Here, all team members share and reflect on their experiences from the imageries together. Each participant may receive different but complementary insights and innovative ideas that enrich the collective project.
2. **In a group of individuals with separate projects** – For example, if you are working on individual master's theses, doing the course together can provide mutual inspiration. Even though each participant focuses on their own project, sharing experiences can spark new ideas for one another.
3. **Individually** – You can also take this course on your own, auto-didactically, for any personal or professional project you are pursuing.

Each of the **five imagery exercises** of this course is addressing a specific theme or topic:

- The imagery with the title ***Developing New Ideas*** is about generating fresh, intuitive insights.
- The imagery called ***Facing Unexpected Challenges*** is about working through inner and outer obstacles.
- In the imagery titled ***Finding Vital Resources*** you can discover and access inner and outer sources of support.
- ***Gaining Fresh Perspectives*** is the title of the imagery that can help you to see your project or situation from new angles.
- And in the imagery called ***Taking Next Steps*** you can identify concrete, practical actions to move forward.

You do **not need to follow a fixed order or sequence** when doing the imageries. Instead, you are encouraged to **choose the exercise that best fits your current need** — whether you are seeking inspiration, clarity, motivation, or guidance through challenges.

A Short Introduction to the TRILOGOS Method

The TRILOGOS Method, developed by Swiss pedagogue Linda Vera Roethlisberger (2012, 2013a, 2013b), is an approach to personality development and consciousness training that

emphasizes integrating the rational, emotional, and spiritual dimensions of human existence – in simple terms, our abilities *to think, to feel and to trust and believe*. Though the TRILOGOS Method is called "method," it does not follow a technical procedure but is better understood as what Anders Lindseth called a dialogical method (2015: 47) that is, a way of reflecting on life, or, as Hans-Georg Gadamer put it literally, "a way of following" (1993: 48).

Roethlisberger frames this integrative development of human capacities as a combination of IQ (*rational intelligence*, like analytical thinking), EQ (*emotional intelligence*, like empathy, (Goleman, 1995)), and SQ (*spiritual intelligence*, like the human ability to believe and trust in ultimate meaning (Zohar & Marshall, 2001)). These three forms of intelligence are summarized in the formula IQ + EQ + SQ = PsyQ. And here PsyQ means the *human potential* (Roethlisberger, 2006: 16, 22). This triadic integration reflects why the approach is named "TRI-LOGOS" and places it within the tradition of the Human Potential Movement (e.g., Maslow, 1954; Huxley, 1945), with an emphasis on developing the whole human being.

At the core of the TRILOGOS Method lies the development of intuition, understood as *intuitio*, or immediate insight and perception (Roethlisberger, 2006: 46). This aspect aligns the TRILOGOS Method with transpersonal psychology (Kraspow & Scotton, 1999), where intuition plays a key role in realizing human potential (see also Jung, 1959 or Wilber, Engler & Brown, 1986)

To make this approach practical, Roethlisberger created a self-guided course titled *In Touch with Your Inner Voice* (2012a, 2012b, 2013), comprising over 80 guided imageries, many of them available as audio exercises. Though guided imageries are practiced in a wide range of fields like psychotherapy, cancer treatment, sports, etc. (e.g. Leuner, 1969; Murray, 2004; Morris, Spittle & Watt, 2005; Day, 1994), in the TRILOGOS Method they are adapted for educational purposes in terms of personality development, supporting what C. G. Jung (1959) called *individuation*, or the unfolding of the true self.

However, guided imagery in the TRILOGOS Method is not merely a relaxation technique but a structured meditative journey that engages the imagination as a space for deep self-reflection. This is significant because imagination has historically been an important practice in philosophy, particularly in what Pierre Hadot called "spiritual exercises"—practices aimed at reflecting on and transforming one's life (Hadot, 2010: 59). Although the TRILOGOS imageries differ from classical philosophical exercises like those of the Stoics, their intention is similar: to investigate life, find orientation, and foster human development (Weiss, 2021: 4).

In this way, the TRILOGOS Method bridges topics of psychology, philosophy, pedagogy and theology, offering a holistic path for both self-knowledge and practical wisdom. Philosophers

like Teichmann & Evans (1999: 1) and Ran Lahav (2016: 20) have emphasized that philosophizing is about reflecting on the human condition, and this is precisely what TRILOGOS imageries seek to do—by exploring themes such as meaning, trust, change, and wisdom and so on.

Moreover, quantitative studies at the Faculty of Psychology at the University of Vienna have shown that practicing the TRILOGOS Method leads to measurable benefits: improved quality of life (Palatinus, 2015), reduced stress and improved stress resilience (Höck, 2016), and enhanced perception of personal abilities (Dreger, 2015).

Finally, from a philosophical practice perspective, the TRILOGOS Method resonates with Anders Lindseth's (2020b) question, "*What is at stake in the narrative?*", as participants are invited to reflect on their experiences from an imagery exercise in a way that reveals deeper existential meaning. For a more detailed exploration of the TRILOGOS Method see the Roethlisbergers autodidactical course "In Touch with the Inner Voice" Level 1-3 or the research report *Diamonic Dialogues* (Weiss, 2021).

How to Approach the Guided Imageries of this Course

Some may already be familiar with guided imagery; for others, it might be a completely new experience. This short chapter explains how the guided imageries of this course work, what to expect, and how to engage with them — especially if you are doing this for the first time.

The 8 General Steps of Each Guided Imagery

Each of the five exercises in this course, based on the TRILOGOS Method, follows the same **eight-step structure**, designed to guide you safely and effectively through the process:

1. **Physical Relaxation** – You begin by relaxing your body, calming your breath, and adopting a comfortable and upright posture, creating a foundation of ease and openness.
2. **Mental and Emotional Calmness** – You are invited to let go of everyday thoughts and feelings, allowing inner stillness to unfold and making space for deeper experiences to emerge.

3. **Connecting with a Higher Source** – You establish a connection with something greater than yourself — whether you call it God, Spirit, Nature, Atman, the Void, or simply a creative life force — to feel supported and embedded in a larger context.
4. **Reconnecting with Your Inner Wisdom** – You connect with your **inner wisdom**, which symbolically appears to you as a spiritual helper. This spiritual helper may take many forms: a sage, mentor, power animal, sphere of light, higher self, or even an ancestor or loved one. You are invited to welcome this helper in whatever way feels right for you.
5. **Experiencing a Symbolic Scenario** – Together with your spiritual helper, you enter a symbolic scene or landscape where a meaningful experience takes place — such as encountering a challenge, discovering a gift, or gaining a new perspective on your project that you are doing the imagery for.
6. **Gaining Insights and Asking Questions** – You reflect on what you have experienced and may ask your spiritual helper questions to deepen your understanding of how this experience relates to your life or project.
7. **Returning and Letting Go** – You say goodbye to your spiritual helper, release the imagery, and symbolically close the door to the inner world, knowing you can return whenever needed.
8. **Waking Up and Reorienting** – You gently return to full awareness of your body and surroundings, carrying the most important insights back into your daily life.

Challenges You Might Encounter – And Why They Are Normal

Especially if you are new to guided imagery, there are a few typical challenges that may arise. These are completely normal and nothing to worry about:

1. Difficulty Imagining Pictures or Scenes:

Sometimes people say, "*I couldn't see anything*", or "*I couldn't imagine the landscape or the helper*." If that happens, don't worry! Imagination is like a muscle — it gets stronger with regular practice. Even if you can't "see" anything clearly, trust that something is happening on a deeper level. Also, not all impressions are visual — perhaps you notice a feeling, a scent, a sound, or just a vague sense of presence. All of this is valuable. And as a little test: *If I ask you to imagine a red rose — can you sense it in your imagination now?* Yes? Then you have everything you need!

2. Uncertainty When Connecting with a Higher Source:

The part of the imagery where you connect to Universal Nature, God, Allah, Spirit, Atman, the Void, or whatever name you prefer, can feel unfamiliar for some at first. This is a very

personal step and may need some practice to feel natural. Some participants may do a prayer or inner ritual, some may imagine a divine light, others may focus on nature or universal energy. Over time, you will discover which "inner image" or way of connecting works best for you. The purpose of this step is to foster basic trust and deeper relaxation.

3. Difficulty Sensing a Spiritual Helper:

It is also common that some participants don't immediately sense a spiritual helper. Again, no need to worry! You can simply believe and trust that a helper is there, even if you cannot see or sense him or her clearly. The spiritual helper is there to offer guidance and support, and over time, as you practice more, you may begin to perceive him or her more clearly.

Important Recommendations for a Safe and Beneficial Experience

Please note a few important recommendations for your well-being:

- Only engage actively in these exercises if you feel emotionally balanced and stable.
- If you are unsure whether to participate, it's perfectly fine to read the exercise first before listening to it. You can always return to the audio when you feel ready.
- If you feel uncertain or uncomfortable, do not hesitate to pause or stop the exercise and seek support from a trusted person.
- If in doubt, or if you are working through a mental health issue, please consult a trusted doctor or therapist before using these materials.

Please also note: The authors of this course accept no liability for the application and use of the course materials.

Final Words Before You Begin

In sum: You are invited to take part in these exercises in a way that feels right for you. If you prefer to start by only reading an exercise and not listening to it, that is completely fine. If you wish to immerse yourself fully with closed eyes, you are warmly encouraged to do so. And remember — if nothing appears or if you don't "sense or see" what is described, this is a normal part of the learning process. Trust that what needs to unfold will unfold over time.

With this in mind, we wish you an enriching and inspiring journey through the world of your fantasy.

2 Developing New Ideas

Exercise



1. Allow your body to relax

Before you start with the exercise make sure that your mobile phone is in silent mode, so that you're not unexpectedly interrupted during the exercise. Also, if you wear glasses take them off now. And if there is anything that might constrain you, like a belt or buttons, you can loosen them now. And after you have done all this you can make yourself comfortable on your chair, you're getting into a comfortable, upright posture and close your eyes.

And as you close your eyes, a pleasant silence begins to awaken in you ... Consciously, you take two or three deep breaths in and out ... With each breath, everything around you and within you can become calmer and calmer ... Any external sounds become less and less important ... Only my voice will remain a constant companion, and I would like to thank you for your trust to follow my voice now ...

In the silence awakening within you, you can feel how your feet rest gently and how they are in good contact with the ground ... Through this allows your lower and upper legs, as well as your knees, to relax more and more ... You are sitting comfortably on your chair – your chair that steadily and reliably carries you, so that a deep feeling of being supported and held can unfold within you ... As a result, your pelvis and, in turn, your abdomen can relax more and more ... Your organs continue to perform their work steadily and automatically ... Your spine can naturally return to an upright, comfortable posture ... as your chest gently rises and falls in the quiet, steady rhythm of your breathing ... rising ... and falling ... rising ... and falling ...

Your neck and head can also relax more and more ... and with them, also your shoulders and arms ... Your hands rest gently in your lap ...

Your entire physical body can now let go and relax more and more ... With that also any remaining tension you may still feel in your body can gradually relax ... so that your body almost drifts into sleep, while your mind remains awake – fully awake – and eager to unfold its full creative potential.

2. Let your thoughts and feelings come to rest

And with your fully awake mind, you can observe how your world of feelings and thoughts can also become calmer and calmer ... Everything emotionally stirred up over the past days can gradually settle, like stirred-up sand in water that slowly sinks back to the bottom ... Anything that still reminds you of your daily life – all fears and doubts, all expectations and desires – you can symbolically breathe out ... while you inhale nourishing, revitalizing oxygen.

This also has a positive effect on your thoughts ... They, too, can become calmer and calmer.

3. Connect yourself with the Supreme Being / Creative Power

With that the pleasant, soothing silence within you can more and more unfold and expand, making it easier for body, mind and soul to come into harmony ...

And to enjoy this soothing harmony even more, you now imagine a blue curtain that you draw from left to right, leaving behind everything you do not need at this moment ... You can come back and retrieve it later if you wish.

After closing the blue curtain, you can more easily concentrate and thus center yourself ... And through this state of centeredness, you can become aware of your inner center – the symbol of your inner home ... And you can simply enjoy this feeling of centeredness, this sense of being whole, of being at one with all.

4. The inner world awakens, you meet your spiritual helper

And in this feeling of being centered and whole and at one with all, you can also become aware of your connection to something greater—whatever you may call it: The vastness of nature, Universal Consciousness, God, Allah, Atman, The Void, Spirit or the divine in its many names ... you are invited to reconnect in your own way ... through meditation, prayer, or simply by resting in this awareness. And in this connection, you can feel and know yourself safe and secure—knowing that you are part of something greater than yourself.

In this connection with God, Allah, Universal Nature, or whatever you call it, you now also become aware of your inner wisdom—a deep source of guidance and support. This inner wisdom may take shape as a spiritual helper now, maybe as a wise scholar or sage, or what some call the Higher Self. Others may experience it as a power animal, a sphere of light, or even the presence of a beloved ancestor or guide. However this force appears to you, it comes in unconditional love and support.

Perhaps you recognize your spiritual helper from a previous exercise, or perhaps you are meeting him or her for the first time. And maybe you do not yet see him or her clearly—but you can sense his or her presence, feel a gentle warmth, or you simply know that he or she is with you now. You trust and believe in the presence of this good force. And if, for any reason, this presence does not feel right to you, you can always ask for another spiritual helper.

5. A surprising experience

In connection with God, Allah, the Universal Nature or whatever you call it and in the trusted presence of your spiritual helper, your inner senses awaken now, and you find yourself in a beautifully sunlit art studio—a space of creativity and inspiration. Large windows allow golden light to flood the room, casting soothingly warm reflections on the wooden floor here. The air is filled with the subtle, invigorating scent of oil paints and freshly sharpened pencils. Around you, there are various creative tools: an art desk, a collection of brushes, paints, and blank canvases waiting to be transformed. Your spiritual helper shows you a cozy chair beside the desk, inviting you to sit down ... and as you take a seat, the chair gently creaks, molding to your presence, offering comfort and support. And while you make yourself comfortable on the chair, your inner senses can more and more focus on this inspiring place here. For a moment, you simply breathe in and out this creative atmosphere, allowing its peaceful energy to settle within you.

And as you are sitting on this comfy chair here, you can now decide whether you just want to continue to relax and enjoy the creative atmosphere here in the art studio together with your spiritual helper ... or whether you want to do some creative work together with him or her. You decide intuitively.

And whatever you decided to do now, you are exactly where you need to be. Because in this space, you are free to explore, to create, or simply to be.

Those who decided to do some creative work with their spiritual helper, recognize now that he or she places a box onto the desk ... with a warm smile, your spiritual helper explains that everything you have gathered so far for your project is inside this box—your ideas, plans, applications, timelines, milestones etc. All the effort you have already invested is safely stored within it. And as he or she says that, you sense that your spiritual helper now takes something out of his or her pockets and places 1 or 2 or maybe even 3 new things or items outside the box.

With a meaningful glance, your spiritual helper lets you know that these are things that are not inside your box yet – but still important, even if they appear to be a bit farfetched in the first moment. What do you sense now, what items appear on the desk outside the box? Whatever it is, you can more and more focus on it. What forms or colors do the items have? Is it something big or small? Is it something concrete that you could hold in your hands, or is it something tacit like a text, a message, maybe even a certain scent or smell? Or is one of the items a radio, transmitting an important program now? And whatever you now not think but intuit outside the box – whatever it is that comes to your mind now – you are thankful for it. And should you have any questions, you can always ask your spiritual helper and with a meaningful glance, he or she lets you know what these things outside the box want to tell you about your project. Maybe they symbolize elements that you have overlooked so far? Maybe they signify ideas that you have not thought about yet? Maybe they point towards new directions you had not yet considered? And whatever it is that your spiritual helper makes you aware of, more and more you can engage with it now in a receiving state of contemplation (1 minute silent work).

6. Make your way back, pose questions

After receiving many new insights and creative impulses, it is now soon time to return from the art studio. If there are still questions or unclear aspects, you can clarify them now with your helper (30 seconds silence).

Enriched with many new inspirations, it is now time to leave this creative space and return to your daily life. This goes also for those who simply enjoyed resting and absorbing the creative atmosphere here. Everyone gently rises from the comfortable chair in the art studio, feeling a sense of renewed focus and ease.

Before parting ways, your spiritual helper offers you a gift—a final blessing of guidance and protection, ensuring that you carry this connection with you, even as you step back into the world of action.

7. Taking leave, protecting yourself

With gratitude, you thank your spiritual helper, knowing that you can always come back here to the art studio. You say goodbye and then your spiritual helper returns to his or her realm, and you, too, begin to transition back into the world of your everyday life.

You release all impressions and sensations, allowing them to gently fade, knowing that the most important ones will remain within you anyway. Symbolically you close the door to the world of your phantasy thoroughly, knowing that you can always come back to this place.

8. Waking up, returning

Now, you also recall the blue curtain that was drawn at the beginning of this journey. Slowly, you pull it back from right to left, signaling your return to full awareness.

With this, you start to reconnect with your physical body, which almost fell a bit asleep. Gently you move your fingers and toes ... you can also stretch slightly ... you then take two or three deep, refreshing breaths ... and as you breathe you come more and more back into the here and now ... and when you feel ready, you open your eyes, refreshed, inspired, and well back in the here and now.

Evaluation Sheet

A) What you experienced

How did you experience the imagery exercise overall?

(For example: atmosphere, emotions, bodily sensations, inner images, contact with your spiritual helper)

Note: As mentioned in the introduction, no one is born a master at guided imagery — it takes regular practice. Some people might experience it as challenging to relax deeply at first, or may even notice

physical symptoms like tension or a slight headache. Others may feel that "nothing" happened — no images, no feelings, no impressions. This is completely normal when starting this type of exercise. Trust that images and impressions will come when the time is right. If you felt you experienced "nothing," feel free to reflect on that "nothingness" in the following questions — that too is an important experience. Also, connecting with Nature, God, Allah, the Creative Power, etc., and welcoming a spiritual helper may take time. You will discover over time what works best for you — and your spiritual helper will show up when it is right. Trust and believe that these good forces are with you.

What did you experience and perceive when your spiritual helper showed you the box with your project ideas and placed new items outside the box?

(Describe as concretely as possible: What were the items outside the box? What did they look, feel, sound like? How did you feel, when you discovered them?)

Note: If you chose to continue to relax in the art studio instead of working with your spiritual helper, that is completely fine. In imagery exercises, it is important to follow what feels right for you. Never feel pressured—your choices should always be made with self-responsibility.

B) Ideas and associations

What ideas and associations spontaneously come to your mind when you think about the items outside the box?

(Feel free to "free-associate" — like in dream interpretation. What do these items remind you of? What do they symbolize for you?)

Note: To illustrate free association, imagine your spiritual helper places a photograph of a ropedancer in a circus next to the box. Possible associations could be: finding the right balance, taking safety precautions, being in the spotlight, staying focused. These are just examples—many more are possible because “there are as many interpretations of the truth as individuals” (Roethlisberger, 2012: 13.) At this stage, the meaning of these associations doesn’t matter yet—just write down any ideas that come to mind intuitively.

If you work in a group:

What associations and thoughts did others share when you told them about your items?

(What spontaneously came to their minds when they imagined your experience? — Remember: There are no wrong interpretations. There are as many interpretations of truth as there are people.)

C) Bridge to Praxis (Applying the Insights)

Looking at all the ideas and associations (your own and perhaps those of others), what do you realize when you relate them to your project?

(What new insights do you gain about the project? Please be as specific and actionable as possible.)

Note: Returning to the ropedancer example—ask yourself:

- Could “finding the right balance” relate to balancing project finances?
- Does “taking safety precautions” suggest a need for better risk management?
- Is “staying focused” relevant to keeping the team aligned with goals?

These are just examples, but the insights you develop might surprise you or they can also take time to become clear. Stay open, creative, and patient as you explore possible connections.

And remember: It’s completely normal if you don’t yet understand what your experience, gifts, or symbols from the exercise might mean—especially in relation to your project. Sometimes meaningful interpretations arise only after a few days. Trust that the insights will come when the time is right.

How could you integrate these insights into your project and share them with your team?

(What are concrete next steps? Please be as specific and actionable as possible.)

Note: Now, shift from insights to action. Often, hints for next steps can be found within the imagery itself.

For example: If risk management is a key theme, consider how a ropedancer’s safety net might symbolize support structures in your project. The net consists of links and ties—what professional or structural “safety nets” (mentors, contingency plans, contracts) could prevent your project from “falling through”? Use these metaphors as creative prompts to define practical steps.

Beyond the project: If you reflect on all the ideas and associations — your own and those from others — what might they have to do with you personally?

(What personal insights do you gain? What might be next steps in your personal development?)

Note: Take the same ideas from your imagery but apply them to yourself and your everyday life. For example:

- Could the ropedancer relate to your personal work-life balance?
- Does staying focused and upright symbolize maintaining a strong personal or ethical stance?
- Is there an area in life where you feel you are “walking a tightrope”?

Reflect on what these insights reveal about your growth and next steps in personal development.

If you work in a group:

Think back to all the ideas and associations that you made on other participants items. Now take them back to yourself: "Could any of these also relate to me?"

(Is there something important you become aware of?)

What did you learn about yourself through this exercise?

(e.g., strengths, values, challenges, creative resources)

Is there anything else you would like to note about this exercise?

(For example: open questions, surprising symbols, unclear impressions you still wonder about)

3 Facing Unexpected Challenges

Exercise



1. Allow your body to relax

In order to begin with this imagery exercise, make yourself comfortable in your chair ... You loosen any belts or buttons that might feel restrictive ... You make sure that your mobile phone is switched off or in silent mode ... If you wear glasses, you take them off ... and then, as usual, you gently close your eyes.

And with your eyes closed, you can direct your attention more and more to your physical body ... You can feel how you are gently carried and supported by the chair on which you are sitting ... You can also feel how the soles of your feet—and with them, your whole being—are in good contact with the ground, allowing your feet, legs, and knees to relax more and more ...

Through this steady connection to the ground and the gentle support of the chair, your pelvis, as well as your spine—from the tailbone all the way up to the head—can gradually find a more comfortable and upright position.

You can sense how your entire physical body is now able to relax and settle more and more ... And with that, also you yourself can become calmer and calmer ... Any sounds from the outside world become less and less relevant—only my voice will remain as your steady companion ...

A soothing silence begins to awaken within you ... And in this emerging silence, any remaining physical tension or even blockages you may still feel can gradually relax ... You take a few deep breaths in and out, sensing how your chest gently rises and falls—in a

soothing, pleasant rhythm—while your hands rest gently in your lap, and your arms, neck, and head relax more and more.

With each breath, in this steady and gentle rhythm, your entire physical body—from head to toe and from toe to head—can now restore and regenerate ... It can take a well-deserved rest, almost drifting into sleep ... But your mind remains awake—fully awake ...

2. Let your thoughts and feelings come to rest

And with your fully awake mind, you can now sense how your emotional world can also relax more and more ... Everything that still ties you to your daily life—all fears, doubts, and worries, but also all hopes, wishes, and expectations—you can symbolically breathe out ... while you inhale fresh, soothing air ...

As your emotions relax, your thoughts can also become calmer and calmer.

A pleasant silence settles more and more within you, allowing your body, mind, and soul to return to a state of optimal balance ...

To enjoy this balance even more, you now draw a blue curtain from left to right, leaving behind everything you do not need at this moment ... You can always come back for it later if you wish.

3. Connect yourself with the Supreme Being / Creative Power

After closing the blue curtain, you can experience yourself in harmony with yourself ... You can fully enjoy this sense of harmony and, through it, reconnect with your innermost center – as a symbol for your inner home.

And in this innermost—your inner sanctuary, so to speak— you may sense a connection to something greater ... something greater than words can define. Some may experience the vastness of nature, the universal flow of life, Spirit, others might call it God, Allah, Atman and so on ... and whatever you may call this and however you perceive it, you are now invited to rest in this connection ... and to open yourself towards it in whatever way feels natural to you, i.e. through mediation, prayer or simply by resting in this awareness. And in this moment, you can simply feel and know that you are safe and secure in and through this connection.

4. The inner world awakens, you meet your spiritual helper

And in this meditative state of being in connection with nature, God, Allah or whatever you call it, you also become aware of your inner wisdom again—a source of clarity and insight that comes from deep within. In this moment, a spiritual helper emerges, coming to you in unconditional love and support. This helper may appear as a sage, a teacher, or an enlightened guide. Some may even experience it as a light-filled presence, a power animal, or a deeply familiar energy. However this force reveals itself to you, you are invited to welcome it friendly.

Perhaps you cannot see your spiritual helper yet, maybe you can only sense him or her—through a feeling of warmth, a quiet knowing, or a gentle shift in energy. However it comes, you trust and believe in the presence of this good force. And if, for any reason, this spiritual helper does not feel right for you, you can ask for someone else—someone that truly resonates with you.

5. A surprising experience

In connection with Universal Nature, the Void, God, Allah, or whatever you call it and accompanied by your spiritual helper, your inner senses begin to awaken. You awaken to a new morning and find yourself in the heart of a beautiful garden. Every leaf, every petal in this garden glistens softly in the golden light of the rising sun, still holding tiny drops of moisture from the night before. There are vibrant flower beds, filled with lavender, wild roses, and golden sunflowers stretching toward the morning sun. The air is filled with the subtle, refreshing scent of morning dew. More and more you can focus your inner senses on the organic surroundings of this almost magic garden with its ancient oak trees standing in quiet wisdom, their branches gently swaying in a soft breeze. And you now also recognize a small pond nearby that reflects the sky. Floating lily pads rest on the water, and perhaps a tiny frog is hiding among them, croaking in the distance. More and more your inner senses awaken in this peaceful atmosphere and for a moment you can just enjoy being here.

While you still enjoy the soothing atmosphere here in this garden your spiritual helper invite you to decide where do you want to continue to relax or whether you want to do some work with him or her. You decide intuitively.

If you decided to just relax then your spiritual helper shows you an inviting rustic wooden bench beneath the shelter of a well-grown apple tree. You take a seat there and you can more and more enjoy the scenery here.

If you decided to work a bit with your spiritual helper then he or she invites you to take a stroll through the garden and together you start to gently walk on one of its many paths.

And as you and your spiritual helper stroll along the peaceful garden path, enjoying the natural surroundings, something unexpected appears ahead on the path—something is blocking the way. What is it, what can you sense? Is it a heap of cut wood, left behind and blocking the path, or a large puddle of rainwater that makes walking forward difficult? Maybe it is a distracting noise—perhaps the sound of construction work outside the garden—or you suddenly sense an unexpected, unpleasant smell that does not belong to the beauty of this place? Whatever it is that appears in front of you on the path, take a moment to focus your inner senses on this challenge or obstacle. How does it feel to encounter this? Your spiritual helper observes your emotional reaction with kindness and gently shows you now how you can overcome this obstacle. And while your spiritual helper shows you how you can face and overcome this challenge, he or she also tells you that this obstacle symbolically stands for an eventual challenge in your project and how you can deal with it constructively. What is happening now? What is your spiritual doing now? More and more you can learn from him or her and should you have any questions your spiritual helper is always there to answer them willingly, while you can now just perceive and absorb what he or she is communicating to you. (1-2 minutes of silent work)

6. Make your way back, pose questions

After you received many important insights and valuable impressions about how you can face and overcome this challenge here, your spiritual helper tells you now that it is time to go back to the starting point of your walk. On the way there you can discuss and clarify still open questions with him or her.

Now, back at the starting point of your walk here in the garden it is about time to bid your spiritual helper farewell. This goes also for those who have been resting on the wooden bench. Your spiritual helper gives you a final blessing so that you are also protected and guided in your daily life.

7. Taking leave, protecting yourself

You thank your spiritual helper for the cooperation. Then he or she goes back into his or her realm while you return to the world of your everyday life too. For that you let go of all impressions, knowing that the most important remain with you anyway. Symbolically, you

close the door to the spiritual world thoroughly behind you, in the awareness that you can always return here.

8. Waking up, returning

After you have closed this door, you remember the blue curtain again. You draw it open from right to left, and with that you remember your physical body again which almost fell a bit asleep here on the chair. Gently you begin to wake up your body by moving your fingers, and also your toes. You can stretch your back. You also tighten several muscles of your body, only to release them again after a second. You breathe deeply in and out, and then, when you feel ready for it, you open your eyes again and come well back into the here and now.

Evaluation Sheet

A) What You Experienced

How did you experience the imagery exercise overall?

(For example: atmosphere, emotions, bodily sensations, inner images, contact with your spiritual helper.)

***Note:** If you are new to guided imagery, you may find it easy or challenging to immerse yourself—both are natural. Like jogging, it takes regular practice. If you experienced “nothing,” consider what that might symbolize. Trust that insights will emerge in their own time and that whatever you sense, even if it seems like nothing, is meaningful in its own way. Connecting with Nature, God, Allah, or the Creative Power, as well as recognizing your spiritual helper, may take time. Be patient—when the moment is right, the experience will unfold.*

How did you experience the garden?

(Describe your surroundings: the sights, scents, sounds, and overall atmosphere.

How did it feel to be there?)

What was the unexpected challenge that appeared on your path?

(Describe the obstacle—was it physical, auditory, or something else? What was your initial reaction?)

Note: If you chose to continue to relax on the park bench instead of going on a little hike with your spiritual helper, that's completely fine. In imagery exercises, it's important to follow what feels right for you. Never feel pressured—your choices should always be made with self-responsibility.

B) Ideas and Associations

What ideas and associations come to mind regarding the obstacle you encountered?

(For example: What does it remind you of? What could it symbolize? How does it relate to challenges in your project or life?)

Note: As an example: imagine the obstacle was a large puddle blocking the path. Possible associations might be: Murky waters, rainy weather or getting wet shoes. At this stage, don't

analyze—simply list your spontaneous impressions. And don't forget: There are no wrong interpretations but “there are as many interpretations of the truth as individuals” (Roethlisberger, 2012: 13)

If you are working in a group:

What did others associate with your obstacle?

(Did their perspectives add new insights for you? Did they see something you hadn't considered?)

C) Bridge to Praxis (Applying the Insights)

How do the obstacle and the way your spiritual helper guided you through it relate to your current project or work?

(What insights do you gain? Could this challenge reflect something you are currently facing?)

Note: Returning to the puddle example:

- Could the murky waters reflect “murky affairs” in terms of unclear or questionable aspects in your project?
- If the puddle reminds you of rainy weather, consider the saying: “There's no such thing as bad weather, only bad clothes.” Does this suggest that with the right preparation, challenges in your project can be managed?
- If your first thought was “wet shoes,” could this extend to “getting cold feet” – perhaps indicating hesitation or uncertainty about moving forward?

Even if the connection isn't immediate, stay open—deeper insights often reveal themselves over time.

And remember: It's completely normal if you don't yet understand what your experience, your obstacle or any other symbols from the exercise might mean—especially in relation to your project. Sometimes meaningful interpretations arise only after a few days. Trust that the insights will come when the time is right.

How can you integrate these insights into your project or team collaboration?

(What are concrete next steps? Please be as specific and actionable as possible.)

Note: *Moving from insight to action:*

- *If "murky affairs" resonated with you in the previous step, then ask yourself how you can clear up and clarify the respective situation.*
- *If the saying "There's no such thing as bad weather, only bad clothes" resonated with you, then formulate concrete steps and measures that can help you to prepare for difficult situations.*
- *If the idea of "getting cold feet" resonated with you, then how can you make your project, as well as you and your team, more resilient?*

Break down these ideas into practical steps you can take.

Beyond the project, what might this obstacle symbolize for you personally?

(Does it reflect an internal challenge, an emotional block, or an aspect of your personal growth?)

Note: *Shift the focus inward and consider how these insights relate to you personally:*

- *Could "murky waters" symbolize emotional patterns, beliefs, or attitudes that need clarity and resolution?*
- *Does the saying "There's no such thing as bad weather, only bad clothes" suggest a tendency to enter situations unprepared-and the need to work on that?*
- *Could "getting cold feet" indicate a need to strengthen your resilience and ability to persevere?*

Reflect on how this exercise mirrors your personal development journey. Remember, there are as many interpretations of the truth as individuals—there are no “right” interpretations of symbols, only interpretations that feel right to you.

If you are working in a group

Reflecting on the associations made about others’ obstacles—could any of them apply to you as well?

(Is there something important you become aware of?)

What did you learn about yourself through this exercise?

(For example: strengths, values, challenges, creative resources.)

Is there anything else you would like to note about this experience?

(For example: open questions, surprising symbols, unclear impressions you still wonder about.)

4 Finding Vital Resources

Exercise



1. Allow your body to relax

Before we begin, I would like to ask you to turn on the silent mode on your mobile ... If you wear glasses, I invite you to take them off for now ... You also loosen any belts or buttons that might feel restrictive ... Then, you take a comfortable, upright posture and, as usual, gently close your eyes.

And with your eyes closed, you can first feel your breath ... You can notice how, as you inhale, your chest gently rises ... and as you exhale, it gently falls again ... And perhaps you also become aware of the brief pause between inhaling and exhaling.

Through this gentle rhythm of your breath, a deep sense of well-being can begin to settle into your body once again ... And you can sense how a soothing stillness is awakening within you
...

Any external sounds can fade more and more into the background, becoming less and less important ... Only my voice will remain as your steady companion, and I thank you for your trust in following my voice now ...

... In this emerging stillness within you, your entire physical body can relax once again, can rest ... All your organs continue to perform their work steadily and reliably ... A deep sense of gratitude fills you ... All your muscles can loosen more and more ... But not just your muscles—your skin and even your bones can gradually relax as well ... And any remaining tension or tightness that you might still sense in your body can now release bit by bit, easing and settling.

And more and more, you can simply enjoy the feeling as your entire physical body—from head to toe—recovers, regenerates, and grants itself a moment of rest ... Almost as if it were falling asleep, your body ... But your mind remains awake—fully awake—and is now ready to unfold its full creative potential.

2. Let your thoughts and feelings come to rest

The relaxation of your body now also has a positive effect on your mind ... And with your fully awake awareness, you can sense how also your feelings and thoughts can relax more and more ... Any emotional restlessness or tension that may still linger can gradually settle ... dissolving like sugar in hot tea ...

With that, also your thoughts can now become calmer and calmer.

And the soothing stillness can more and more unfold within you—symbolically, like the smooth surface of a lake after the wind has settled.

And you can simply enjoy this inner peace awakening within you, this soothing stillness in which body, mind, and soul come back into harmony.

And to enjoy this harmony even more, you now imagine yourself drawing a blue curtain from left to right, leaving behind everything you do not need at this moment. You can always return for it later if needed.

3. Connect yourself with the Supreme Being / Creative Power

After you have stored everything behind the blue curtain that you don't need for the moment, you can experience yourself again in harmony with yourself ... and more and more, you can immerse yourself in this harmonious state and more and more you can enjoy it ...

... and in this moment of harmony, you can now also become aware of the profound mystery that surrounds and sustains all of life. Some may call it Universal Nature, others call it God, Allah, Atman, Spirit, the Void or simply the great unfolding of existence. However you relate to it, you are invited to pause, to listen to, to feel and trust in it ... whether as a quiet knowing, a sense of wonder, or a deep peace within. And in this connection, you can rest, knowing yourself safe and secure.

4. The inner world awakens, you meet your spiritual helper

And in this connection with God, Allah, the Universal Nature or whatever you call it, you now also become aware again of your inner wisdom ... and as you rest in this awareness, you may sense the presence of a spiritual helper—a good force that comes to you with unconditional love and care. Perhaps your spiritual helper takes the form of a wise mentor, a radiant being, a power animal, or a loved one who continues to walk with you in spirit. Maybe it is not a form at all, but simply a presence—felt rather than seen. Or you simply know that your spiritual helper is with you now. However this good force appears, you can allow yourself to welcome it ... and you trust and believe in the benevolent presence of your spiritual helper. And if this helper does not feel quite right, you know that you are always free to ask for someone else.

5. A surprising experience

In connection with God, Allah, The Void or whatever you call it and together with your spiritual helper, your inner senses awaken now again. And you can perceive yourself on a warm and sunny day in an alpine landscape on a nice and easy hiking trail ... you have fine hiking clothes on, like sturdy hiking boots, you also carry a backpack on your shoulders ... and more and more you can sense the beautiful nature around you, with high mountains and snow-covered peaks ... the gentle scent of pine trees is in the air ... and in the distant you can sense bees flying from one wildflower to the next ... apart from the flying bees in the distant it is silent here, absolutely silent ... and in this soothing silence you can more and more focus your inner senses on the beautiful landscape here out in the nature ... you can breathe the good and fresh air here and with every breath also you can become more and more calm and enjoy the atmosphere here.

In the peaceful surrounding of this alpine landscape, you are now invited to decide whether you just want to continue to relax or whether you want to do some work together with your spiritual helper. Intuitively you decide what feels right for you now.

If you decided to just relax and recharge here at the hiking trail, your spiritual helper brought a nice and comfy camping chair, folds it up and invites you to make yourself comfortable there.

Those who want to work, are now invited by their spiritual helper to walk a bit further on the hiking trail here. And you walk and walk in this beautiful nature ... but all of a sudden you notice that you are getting thirsty. Instinctively, you reach for your water bottle, but as you lift

it, you realize that it is empty. For a moment, you pause, considering your next move. But just as you do, you sense the soothing sound of flowing water—a gentle trickling, almost like a melody of nature. You follow the sound, and not far ahead, you can make out a small stream, a pure and untouched source of water, flowing steadily through the landscape. With quiet relief, you walk toward it. The water is crystal clear, reflecting the sunlight in soft ripples. You kneel down, cupping your hands, and drink from this source ... and you can sense a wave of energy, clarity, and renewal spreading through you.

And as you finished drinking from this source of water, you notice something floating toward you from further upstream. It drifts effortlessly along the gentle current. Your spiritual helper steps forward, extending his or her hand into the water and carefully retrieving the mysterious object. He or she then turns toward you, showing to you whatever he or she fished out of the water

What is it? What can you sense? Is it something natural—a leaf, a feather, a stone? Or is it something man-made—a certain key, a small box, a bottle with a message—or something completely different? Your spiritual helper hands the gift from this source now over to you—what colors can you sense, what shapes? Has it a rough or a smooth surface? Is it light or heavy? Maybe this gift also radiates a certain scent or smell? Maybe it also makes a certain sound? Whatever impressions come to your mind now, you are thankful for them. And more and more you can focus your inner senses on this gift now. And should you have any questions, then your spiritual helper willfully answers them and tells you how this gift from the water source – symbolically – can turn into a re-source for the project that you are working for now. And with a listening attitude, you now just absorb all the insights that are revealed to you by your spiritual helper, in order to unlock the deeper meaning of this gift more and more. (1-2 minutes of silent work)

6. Make your way back, pose questions

After many insights, inspirations and ideas that you now received, it is time to return to where you started this little hike. On the way back you can clarify still open questions with your spiritual helper. (30 seconds silent work)

Now, back to where you started this little journey it is about time to say goodbye to your spiritual helper. This goes also for those who relaxed and recharged here in a camping chair. As a parting gift, your spiritual helper gives you a final blessing, so that you are also protected and guided by your inner wisdom in your daily life.

7. Taking leave, protecting yourself

You thank your spiritual helper for the cooperation and then he or she returns to his or her realm, while you go back to the world of your here-and-now too.

You release all impressions and sensations, allowing them to fade gently, knowing that the most important insights remain with you anyway. You also close the door to the spiritual world thoroughly now, in the awareness that you always can come back here.

8. Waking up, returning

Now, you also recall the blue curtain that was drawn at the beginning of this journey. Slowly, you pull it back from right to left, signaling your return to full awareness. With this, you start to reconnect with your physical body, which almost fell a bit asleep. Gently you start moving your fingers and toes, you also stretch slightly, you also tighten all muscles of your body for a second, only to release them again in the next. With that you wake up more and more and more, you take two or three deep, refreshing breaths. And then you open your physical eyes again and come well back into the here and now again.

Evaluation Sheet

A) What You Experienced

How did you experience the imagery exercise overall?

(For example: atmosphere, emotions, bodily sensations, inner images, contact with your spiritual helper.)

Note: If this was one of your first guided imagery experiences, you may have found it easier or more challenging to fully immerse yourself. Some people might feel deeply relaxed, while others may experience resistance or even physical sensations like tension or fatigue. All responses are natural. If

you felt you experienced “nothing,” try reflecting on that “nothingness” as part of your answers below. Trust that images and impressions will come when the time is right. Also, connecting with Nature, God, Allah, the Creative Power, etc., and welcoming a spiritual helper may take time. You will discover over time what works best for you — and your spiritual helper will show up when it is right. Trust and believe that this good force is with you.

How did you experience the alpine landscape?

(Describe your experience, the mountains, the scent of pine, the silence, the hike. How did it feel to be there?)

When you discovered the water source and drank from it, what did you experience?

(What sensations arose? Did you feel refreshed, energized, or something else?)

Note: If you chose to continue to relax in a camping chair instead of going on a little hike with your spiritual helper, that's completely fine. In imagery exercises, it's important to follow what feels right for you. Never feel pressured—your choices should always be made with self-responsibility.

What was the object that floated toward you in the water?

(Describe in as much detail as possible: shape, color, texture, scent, or any other impressions.)

B) Ideas and Associations

What ideas and associations come spontaneously to mind when you remember the object from the water?

(For example: What does it remind you of? What could it symbolize? What emotions does it bring up? Feel free to free-associate, as in dream interpretation.)

Note: For example, imagine that your spiritual helper retrieved a paper boat from the water, like those that children make. Possible associations might be: Using something for a different purpose (because normally you use a sheet of paper for writing), being creative, letting go, being playful like a child. At this stage, you don't need to analyze or interpret—simply list your first impressions. And don't forget: "There are as many interpretations of the truth as individuals" (Roethlisberger, 2012: 13)

If you are working in a group:

What did others associate with your object?

(What spontaneous thoughts did they have? Did their interpretations add new insights for you?)

C) Bridge to Praxis (Applying the Insights)

Looking at all the ideas and associations (your own and perhaps those of others), what do you realize when relating them to your project or current challenges?

(What insights do you gain? Do they reveal missing elements, new directions, or overlooked resources?)

Note: Returning to the paper boat example:

- Could "using something for a different purpose" mean repurposing an existing resource in your project?
- Does "letting go" suggest dropping certain aspects to redirect resources elsewhere?
- Could "being playful like a child" mean unlocking new resources by approaching your project with more creativity and openness?

The connection may not always be immediate—stay open and let the insights unfold naturally over time.

And remember: It's completely normal if you don't yet understand what your experience, your gift from the source or any other symbols from the exercise might mean—especially in relation to your project.

Sometimes meaningful interpretations arise only after a few days. Trust that the insights will come when the time is right.

How could you integrate these insights into your project or team collaboration?

(What are concrete next steps? Please be as specific and actionable as possible.)

Note: Now, shift from insights to action—how can you apply these ideas to your project or team?

Often, the answer lies already in the imagery itself. For example:

- Where in your project is an existing resource that could be repurposed in a new way?
- Are there any aspects of your project that you could let go like a paper boat and that would free up resources for more essential areas?
- How can you be more playful in your project in order to bring more creativity, flexibility, or experimentation into your project approach?

Let the metaphor guide your practical next steps. Look for practical ways to implement these insights—small adjustments can often lead to big transformations.

Beyond the project: What might these ideas and associations reveal about you personally?

(What personal insights do you gain? What might be next steps in your personal development?)

Note: Take the same insights from before and ask yourself, for example:

- Could being creative and playful be certain character traits that you want to develop more?
- Is the ability to let go something that you want to work on?
- Are you a bit inflexible in certain situations and do you want to work on that?

If you are working in a group:

Reflecting on the associations that you made about others' objects—could any of them apply to you as well?

(Is there something important you become aware of?)

What did you learn about yourself through this exercise?

(For example: strengths, values, challenges, creative resources.)

Is there anything else you would like to note about this experience?

(For example: open questions, surprising symbols, unclear impressions you still wonder about.)

5 Gaining Fresh Perspectives

Exercise



1. Allow your body to relax

I would like to invite you to make yourself comfortable in your chair ... You make sure that your mobile phone is set into silent mode ... If you wear glasses, I invite you to take them off for now ... If a belt or shirt buttons feel restrictive, you loosen or open them ... And when you are ready, you gently close your eyes, as usual ...

And by closing your eyes, you can begin to listen inward more and more, tuning in to yourself, allowing a deep and peaceful tranquility to awaken within you ... Any external sounds—such as passing cars or the tram—fade more and more into the background, they becoming less and less important ... Only my voice will remain as your steady companion, and I thank you for your trust in following my voice now ...

As this tranquility awakens within you, you can feel how a deep sense of relaxation begins to unfold throughout your entire physical body, allowing you to relax more and more ... Your muscles can loosen, any tension or even blockages you may still notice can gently release, bit by bit ... Your entire skeleton can settle into a comfortable position ... Your feet are in steady contact with the ground ... Your hands rest gently in your lap, palms facing upward ...

Your spine can return to a comfortable, upright posture ... And your breath can naturally settle into a soothing, calming rhythm ...

With each steady, gentle inhale and exhale, your entire physical body can relax more and more ... Your body can grant itself a little rest—a moment of deep rest—almost as if it were falling asleep ... But your mind remains awake—fully awake ...

2. Let your thoughts and feelings come to rest

... so that you can now also notice how your emotions and thoughts are gradually calming down more and more ... Everything that still ties you to your daily life—all doubts, fears, and worries, but also all hopes and wishes—you can symbolically breathe out ... allowing your emotional world to settle more and more, like the surface of a lake after the wind has passed and the waves have gently come to rest ...

With this, your thoughts too can relax more and more—thoughts that you can simply let drift by, like clouds in the sky, until the sun shines again ...

You can enjoy the feeling of body, mind and soul coming into harmony, into optimal balance
In your imagination, you now draw a blue curtain from left to right, leaving behind everything you do not need at this moment ... You can always come back for it later if needed ...

3. Connect yourself with the Supreme Being /Creative Power

And after you have closed the blue curtain, you can increasingly enjoy the evolving stillness within you ...

... and as you settle into this stillness, you may again become aware of your connection to something greater—something vast and timeless that exists within you and beyond you. Some may experience it as the vastness of nature, Universal Consciousness, or the Void, while others might call it God, Allah, Atman, Spirit and so on. And whatever you call it, you are now invited to reconnect in your own way ... i.e. through meditation, prayer, or simply by resting in this awareness. And in this connection with the divine or whatever you call it, you feel and know yourself safe and secure.

4. The inner world awakens, you meet your spiritual helper

In this conscious connectedness with God, Allah, Spirit, the Void or whatever you may call it, you now also reconnect with your inner wisdom ... and in this connection with your inner wisdom you now become aware of a spiritual helper—a presence that comes to you in kindness, wisdom, and unconditional support. For some, this presence may take the shape of sage, or a sphere of light. Others may sense it as their Higher Self, a gentle power animal, or even as the energy of a beloved soul. There is no right or wrong way to experience your spiritual helper. Maybe you see him or her clearly, maybe you feel your spiritual helper subtly,

or you simply know that he or she is with you now ... in any way, you trust and believe in the presence of this good force. And if you feel the need, you are free to ask for another spiritual helper should you not feel fine with the one you welcomed now.

5. A surprising experience

In connection with Universal Nature, God, Allah, Brahman, or whatever you call it and accompanied by your spiritual helper, your inner senses awaken now again and you find yourself on a sunny day standing on a small, grassy hill, a little rise in the landscape, and in front of this little hill the vast ocean stretches out, open and free, meeting the sky at the horizon. You can sense a gentle breeze brushing soothingly against your face, nicely refreshing. The air carries the salty scent of the sea, which you can almost sense on your lips. In the distance, some seagulls are crying and playing in the air. Their sound blending with the soft rustle of the wind through the grass. The sun shines gently, wrapping you in its soft, golden light. For a moment, you just breathe deeply in and out, taking in the freshness and openness of this place, sensing how this atmosphere begins to refresh and relax you.

Your spiritual helper now lets you know that you can choose how you want to spend your time here: either you can just continue to relax here at the ocean in the sense of doing by not-doing, or you can work together with your spiritual helper. You decide intuitively now, what feels right for you.

If you feel like resting and simply being, your helper shows you a beautiful bench, placed perfectly to overlook the ocean. A place to sit down comfortably, relax, and let the sun, the wind, and the sea gently soothe you. Here, you can just be, and recharge.

However, if you decided to work with your spiritual helper, then he or she leads you to a vantage point, an observation platform not far from here, that you haven't noticed yet.

As you arrive at the observation platform, you sense that there is one of these typical tower viewers, that is, a solid telescope or binocular mounted on the safe fence there. You walk closer towards it and as the view opens at this platform you discover a harbor not so far away from the hill—it is a freight port, where ships arrive and depart, where goods of all kinds are loaded and unloaded.

From here, you can sense everything clearly—the ships, the containers, maybe even cranes moving goods, also the activity on the docks. The harbor is alive, a place where exchange, movement, and connection happen constantly.

You take a moment now and focus your inner senses more and more on the harbor: What is it that catches your attention? What special situation do you sense down there? Is there a specific ship, a type of cargo, or a group of people working on the docks that draws your attention? What can you sense now? To help you focus even more deeply, your spiritual helper now can put a coin into the tower viewer, so you can zoom in on the details that matter most. Or perhaps your spiritual helper also switches on a walkie-talkie, and you can receive important communications from the harbor that are specifically meant for you. It can also be that the sea breeze picks up, you notice a specific scent carried by the wind—perhaps the smell of exotic spices from a cargo, fresh wood from crates, or something else entirely.

Whatever it is that you sense now, you can focus your inner senses more and more on it, noticing every impression, even the smallest details that comes to you. And as you focus in on this special scenery, your spiritual helper lets you know that whatever you are sensing now in the harbor symbolically represents an important—maybe new—perspective on your project. And your spiritual helper helps you to translate all what is happening there into the context of your project so that you can understand it from a new and different angle.

And while your spiritual helper reveals new insights for you, you can just perceive and be thankful for whatever comes to your mind now. (1 minute of silent work)

6. Make your way back, pose questions

After receiving many insights and impressions, it is time to leave the observation platform again and walk back to the starting point of this journey. On the way back you can clarify still open questions with your spiritual helper who explains anything you wish to understand. (30 seconds of silent work)

Now back at the starting point of your journey it is about time to say goodbye to your spiritual helper. This goes not only for those who were visiting the observation platform but also for those who relaxed here on a bench.

You thank your spiritual helper for the support and he or she gives you a blessing so that you are protected and guided also in your daily life.

7. Taking leave, protecting yourself

You now bid your spiritual helper farewell. You let go of all impressions and sensations, letting them gently fade, knowing that what is important will remain within you anyways.

Symbolically you now close all doors and windows to the spiritual world, in the awareness that you can always return. And by closing all these doors and windows you now also remember the blue curtain again. Slowly, you pull it back from right to left. With this you begin to reconnect with your physical body again which almost fell a bit asleep.

8. Waking up, returning

Gently you move your fingers and toes, you can also stretch slightly if you like, you then take two or three deep, refreshing breaths. And when you feel ready, you open your eyes again, refreshed, grounded, and present in your daily life.

Evaluation Sheet

A) What You Experienced

How did you experience the imagery exercise overall?

(For example: atmosphere, emotions, bodily sensations, inner images, contact with your spiritual helper.)

Note: As with any new skill, guided imagery takes practice. Some may find it challenging to relax deeply at first, while others might experience tension, slight headaches, or even feel that "nothing" happened—no images, sensations, or impressions. This is completely normal when beginning this type of exercise. Trust that insights will come in their own time. If you experienced "nothing," reflect on that—what might this absence reveal? Even "nothingness" can be meaningful. Similarly, connecting with Nature, God, Allah, the Creative Power, or welcoming a spiritual helper may take time. Be patient with yourself—over time, you will find what works best for you, and your spiritual helper will appear when the moment is right. Trust that this good force is with you.

How did you experience standing on the grassy hill overlooking the ocean?

(Describe your surroundings: the scent of the sea, the breeze, the light, the sounds.

How did it feel to be there?)

If you chose to explore the observation platform, what caught your attention in the harbor?

(Describe what stood out to you: a ship, a specific type of cargo, movement on the docks, a particular scent or sound.)

Note: *If you chose to continue to relax on the bench instead of working with your spiritual helper, that's completely fine. In imagery exercises, it's important to follow what feels right for you. Never feel pressured—your choices should always be made with self-responsibility.*

Did your spiritual helper guide you toward a specific detail or message?

(What insights or symbols did he or she offer?)

B) Ideas and Associations

What ideas and associations come to mind when reflecting on the harbor scene?

(What does it remind you of? What could it symbolize? How does it relate to movement, exchange, or transformation?)

Note: To illustrate free association, imagine your harbor scene involved workers efficiently storing goods into a container. Possible associations might include “clever packaging”, “space-saving”, or “rearranging things”. These are just a few examples—there are countless possibilities. At this stage, the focus isn’t on interpreting their meaning, but simply noting whatever ideas come to mind intuitively. And remember, there are not wrong interpretations but “there are as many interpretations of the truth as individuals” (Roethlisberger, 2021: 13)

If you are working in a group:

What did others associate with your scene in the harbor?

(Did their perspectives add new insights for you? Did they sense something you hadn't considered?)

C) Bridge to Praxis (Applying the Insights)

How do the harbor and the way your spiritual helper guided you relate to your current project?

(What insights do you gain? Could this new perspective highlight something overlooked?)

Note: Returning to your previous associations about the harbor scene, consider:

- Could "clever packaging" relate to how you "package" and "deliver" your project, i.e. how you present and communicate it at a conference?
- Does "space-saving" suggest that your project contains unnecessary elements or areas that could be streamlined or refined?
- Is "rearranging things" prompting you to structure different parts of your project in a more efficient way?

These are just examples—your own insights may surprise you or take time to fully emerge. Stay open, creative, and patient as you explore possible connections.

And remember: It's completely normal if you don't yet understand what your experience, your observations and impressions from the harbor and any other symbols from the exercise might mean—especially in relation to your project. Sometimes meaningful interpretations arise only after a few days. Trust that the insights will come when the time is right.

How can you integrate these insights into your project or team collaboration?

(What are concrete next steps? Please be as specific and actionable as possible.)

Note: Now, shift from insights to action—the imagery itself often provides clues for your next steps.

For example:

- If "clever packaging" resonates with you, consider refining the format of your project rather than the content.
- If "space-saving" feels relevant, it might suggest removing non-essential elements that serve only as "fillers."
- If "rearranging things" stands out, restructuring your project for greater clarity and efficiency could be a meaningful next step.

See these metaphors as creative ideas to identify concrete actions.

Beyond the project, what might this imagery symbolize for you personally?

(Does it reflect an internal challenge, an emotional block, or an area of personal growth?)

Note: Apply the same ideas from your imagery to yourself and your everyday life. For example:

- Could "clever packaging" relate to your communication skills—where what you mean and how others interpret it differ? Might this suggest improving your ability to understand your listener's perspective and adapt your explanations accordingly?
- Could "space-saving" reflect your approach to organization at home, prompting you to cultivate a more structured and efficient environment?
- Could "rearranging things" symbolize reevaluating different aspects of your life—perhaps reconsidering your priorities and making adjustments based on what truly matters to you?

Reflect on how these insights relate to your personal growth and potential next steps in your development.

If you are working in a group:

Reflecting on the associations you made about others' experiences—could any of them apply to you as well?

(Is there something important you become aware of?)

What did you learn about yourself through this exercise?

Is there anything else you would like to note about this experience?

(For example: open questions, surprising symbols, unclear impressions you still wonder about.)

6 Taking Next Steps

Exercise



1. Allow your body to relax

You begin this exercise by making yourself comfortable in your chair ... If any piece of clothing feels restrictive, such as a tight belt, you loosen it ... You also make sure that your mobile phone is in silent mode ... If you wear glasses, you take them off for now ... And once you have done all this, you gently close your eyes.

By closing your eyes, you can almost effortlessly sink into a soothing tranquility that now begins to awaken within you ... And to fully enjoy this soothing tranquility, you take two or three deep breaths in and out ...

With each deep, conscious breath, your entire physical body can calm down more and more ... relaxing from head to toe and from toe to head ...

As your body continues to relax, it becomes easier to turn your attention inward, to listen within, and to simply enjoy the tranquility awakening inside you ... Any external sounds fade into the background, becoming less and less relevant—only my voice remains as your steady companion.

And as this tranquility unfolds more and more within you, you may even begin to sense its healing effect ... Any tension or tightness that you may still notice in your body can gradually release, softening and loosening ...

"In tranquility lies strength"—and as you begin to perceive this more and more, you gently take one or two deep breaths in and out ... allowing your physical body to drift into a state of

deep rest, giving it a well-deserved pause ... while your mind remains awake—fully awake—and is ready to unfold its full creative potential once again.

2. Let your thoughts and feelings come to rest

As your physical body relaxes, your emotions and thoughts can also become calmer and calmer ... Any stirred-up or tense emotions that you may still notice can now gradually settle, like sand swirling in water that slowly sinks back to the bottom ...

This allows your thoughts to quiet down more and more, gently settling into a state of calm.

Body, mind, and soul now come back into harmony ...

And to enjoy this harmony even more, you imagine yourself drawing a blue curtain from left to right, leaving behind everything you do not need in this moment ... You can always come back for it later if needed.

3. Connect yourself with the Supreme Being /Creative Power

And after you have closed the blue curtain, you can deeply relax, and simply enjoy being in this moment of deep tranquility ...

... and in this moment of deep tranquility, you may sense your connection to something greater—some may call it the flow of life, Universal Nature, the source of creativity, others may call it God, Spirit, Allah or simply the great unfolding of being. However you experience it and whatever you may call it, you are invited to open yourself to this connection—i.e. through meditation, prayer, or simply by resting in this awareness, whatever you prefer. And in this connection, you can rest, knowing yourself safe and secure.

4. The inner world awakens, you meet your spiritual helper

In connection with Universal Nature, God, Allah, or whatever you call it, you also reconnect with your inner wisdom, which takes shape of a spiritual helper now—a presence that comes to you with unconditional love, protection, and support. The spiritual helper may appear as a sage or mentor, a power animal, a sphere of light, or as a loved one who continues to accompany you on your journey. Or perhaps it does not take on a shape at all but instead reaches you as a deep feeling of peace, warmth, or belonging. However it comes, you are invited to welcome this good force, and you trust in the presence of this good force. And should you not feel fine with your current spiritual helper, you can always ask for someone else.

5. A surprising experience

In connection with Universal Nature, God, Brahman, Allah, the Void or whatever you call it, and together with your spiritual helper, your inner senses are awakening now again and you find yourself in a beautiful pine forest on a late summer afternoon. The warm glow of the afternoon sun filters softly through the branches of the tall trees, casting golden beams of light onto the forest floor. The air is soothingly warm and soft, filled with the relaxing scent of pine needles and resin. Some forest birds are singing in the distance and the more your inner senses awaken here in this beautiful forest, the more you can relax. You breathe in deeply, and then deeply out, and with every breath, you feel more and more calm and refreshed, and you can just enjoy being here, for a moment.

And while you enjoy the soothing atmosphere here, your spiritual helper invites you to decide whether you want to continue to relax here or whether you want to work a bit with him or her. Intuitively you decide what feels right for you now.

If you now decided to just rest and relax, your helper has brought a comfortable hammock and now carefully mounts it between two strong pine trees. You can lay down in it, gently rocking in the warm summer breeze, feeling safe, held, and supported, and simply enjoy the beauty of this moment.

If you decided to work now then your spiritual helper tells you that he or she wants to show you something in the forest not far from here. You follow your spiritual helper and it doesn't take long until you suddenly discover a beautiful treehouse in front of you, built solidly and safely among the tall pine trees. What does the treehouse look like, what is your first impression? And as you walk closer, you can focus more and more on the treehouse, and your curiosity grows.

You are now at the treehouse where you already found some solid stairs leading up. Together with your helper, you ascend the steps leading up to the treehouse, and while you do so, your spiritual helper lets you know that the steps of this stair symbolically represents the next steps of your project and as he or she says that you arrive at the top of this stair and enter into the treehouse.

What can you sense there, what comes to your mind? Is it a particular piece of furniture or a certain equipment that catches your attention now, or is there a certain music instrument that

your spiritual helper takes now and plays a tune with it? Or is it a completely different instrument, like a binocular or a microscope? Or it is the atmosphere in the room, with a certain scent that you perceive now? More and more you can focus your inner senses on it, and should you need more light to illuminate the treehouse and its meaning then your spiritual helper brought a torch and shows you around here. And while doing so he or she symbolically translates whatever you find here into the next steps of your project, while you just sense and perceive everything carefully—even the smallest details. Go into dialogue with your spiritual helper now, exchange telepathically—you can ask any question, while you carefully sense what crosses your mind ... so that you can understand the message of your spiritual helper better and better. (1-2 minutes of work in silence)

6. Make your way back, pose questions

After you have received many valuable impressions and insights, your spiritual helper tells you now that it is time to go back. On the way there you have the opportunity to clarify still open question about whatever you discovered here in the treehouse and how you can translate that symbolically into concrete, next steps in your project. (30 seconds silent work)

Back at the starting point of your journey it is about time to thank your spiritual helper for the cooperation. This goes also for those who relaxed here in a hammock. Before your spiritual helper leaves, you receive a final blessing so that you are also protected and guided in your daily life.

7. Taking leave, protecting yourself

You then say goodbye. And with that you allow all impressions and sensations to gently fade now, knowing that what is important will remain with you anyway. You close all doors and windows into the spiritual world carefully again, knowing that you can return at any time.

8. Waking up, returning

After that you also remember the blue curtain again which you closed in the beginning of the exercise. Slowly, you open it again, from right to left. And by opening the blue curtain, you allow yourself to fully return to the present moment. You feel your physical body again. You move your fingers and toes gently. You can stretch softly, you can also tighten all muscle of your body only to release them again in the next moment. You then breathe in and out deeply 2 or 3 times. And then, when you feel ready, you open your physical eyes again, and you come well back into the here and now, refreshed, grounded, and fully present.

Evaluation Sheet

A) What You Experienced

How did you experience the imagery exercise overall?

(For example: atmosphere, emotions, bodily sensations, inner images, contact with your spiritual helper.)

Note: As mentioned in the introduction, guided imagery is an ability that develops with practice, so to speak. Some may find it challenging to relax deeply at first or even experience mild physical sensations like tension or a slight headache. Others may feel that "nothing" happened—no images, emotions, or impressions. This is completely normal when starting out. Trust that insights will come when the time is right. If you experienced "nothing," take a moment to reflect on that—what might this absence mean for you? Even "nothingness" can be an important part of the process. Similarly, connecting with Nature, God, Allah, the Creative Power, or welcoming a spiritual helper may take time. Over time, you will discover what works best for you, and when the moment is right, your spiritual helper will reveal itself. Trust in the presence of this good force.

How did you experience the pine forest?

(Describe the sights, scents, sounds, and overall atmosphere. How did it feel to be there?)

If you chose to explore the treehouse, what did you discover after you climbed up the staircase and entered the house?

(Describe any objects, sounds, scents, or sensations that caught your attention.)

Note: *If you chose to relax in the hammock rather than working with your spiritual helper, that is absolutely OK. In guided imagery, there is no right or wrong choice—trust your intuition and make decisions with self-responsibility, free from pressure.*

B) Ideas and Associations

What ideas and associations come to mind regarding the treehouse and its contents?

(What do they remind you of? What could they symbolize? How do they relate to your next steps?)

Note: *To illustrate free association, imagine you discovered a pair of crampons in the treehouse. Possible associations might include aiming high (as crampons are used for climbing high mountains), sure-footedness, or extra grip in challenging conditions. These are just a few examples—there are countless possibilities because “there are as many interpretations of the truth as individuals” (Roethlisberger, 2012: 13), so to speak. At this stage, the focus isn’t on interpretation, but simply noting whatever ideas come to mind intuitively.*

If you are working in a group:

What did others associate with your symbols and discoveries in the treehouse?

(Did their perspectives add new insights for you? Did they see something you hadn’t considered?)

C) Bridge to Praxis (Applying the Insights)

How do the treehouse and the insights from your spiritual helper relate to your project?

(What new perspectives do they reveal? Could they highlight important next steps?)

Note: Returning to previously mentioned associations about the crampons—consider:

- Could they symbolize your ambition to reach high goals, suggesting that the next steps involve securing the right "equipment" or resources for success?
- Might sure-footedness relate to your own stance in the project, are you e.g. standing as firm as you think?
- Are you at a stage where you need extra grip in terms of more willpower and stamina to move forward?

These are just examples—your insights may surprise you or take time to fully emerge. Stay open, creative, and patient as you explore possible connections.

And remember: It's completely normal if you don't yet understand what your experience and gifts from the treehouse or any other symbols from the exercise might mean—especially in relation to your project. Sometimes meaningful interpretations arise only after a few days. Trust that the insights will come when the time is right.

How can you integrate these insights into your project or team collaboration?

(What are concrete next steps? Please be as specific and actionable as possible.)

Note: Now, shift from insights to action—the imagery itself often provides clues for your next steps.

For example:

- If securing the right "equipment" is a key theme, think about what resources or tools could help you establish a stable footing on your path to success.
- If sure-footedness and a firm stance feel relevant, consider how you can strengthen your position and confidence in your next project steps.
- If extra grip stands out, identify what aspects of the project could fuel your willpower and stamina to keep moving forward.

Use these metaphors as creative prompts to shape concrete, actionable steps.

Beyond the project, what might this imagery symbolize for you personally?

(Does it reflect an internal challenge, an emotional block, or an area of personal growth?)

Note: Apply the same insights from your imagery to yourself and your daily life. For example:

- Do you sometimes set high goals without fully considering the skills and competencies needed to achieve them? In other words, do you tend to overestimate yourself and wish to develop a more realistic self-assessment?
- Are you sure-footed in your daily life, or do you often find yourself losing balance or direction?
- Could willpower and stamina be qualities that you not only need for your project but also want to strengthen in your life as a whole?

Reflect on how these insights relate to your personal growth and the next steps in your development.

If you are working in a group:

Reflecting on the associations made about others' experiences—could any of them apply to you as well?

(Is there something important you become aware of?)

What did you learn about yourself through this exercise?

(For example: strengths, values, challenges, creative resources.)

Is there anything else you would like to note about this experience?

(For example: open questions, surprising symbols, unclear impressions you still wonder about.)

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