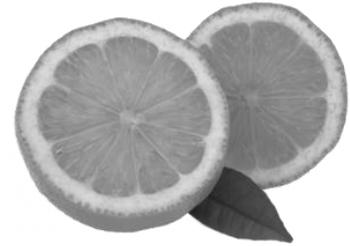


## How Visualization Helps Change Behavior

Extract from *Super Confidence* by Dawn Breslin



### The Lemon Exercise

If you manage to 'get this' you will be on your way to creating the kind of life you want to live. This exercise demonstrates the amazing impact our thoughts have on our physiology. It will demonstrate how your thoughts have power over how you feel.

1. Ask someone to read you this passage or read it to yourself and imagine every detail.
2. If you really don't like lemons, replace the word lemon with another citrus fruit.
3. Sit comfortably and close your eyes.
- 4.

Picture yourself with a sandy desert all around you. The sand is golden in color, its red hot under your feet, and it stretches for miles and miles. Imagine looking up at a gorgeous blue, cloudless sky that stretches all around, empty except for the blazing yellow sun rising in the sky.

You are in this golden desert alone, you feel safe and secure and you are inquisitive about what is around you. As the sun rises you begin to feel hotter and hotter. The sweat is pouring down your chest and back and you begin to feel a little dehydrated.

Imagine now that your mouth is becoming very dry and all you can think of is water. As you breathe in, you feel your nostril hairs begin to sear with the heat. It's now becoming unbearably hot. Imagine the feeling of the sun piercing through your skin into your bones.

Imagine that your mouth is feeling completely dry and your lips cracking in the midday sun. You feel uncomfortable and all you can think about is finding some cool fresh drinking water. You see nothing for miles so you begin to run and as you do you become even hotter and thirstier.

## Session Four | The Lemon Exercise | Quintessential Buddha Dharma

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Suddenly, you see a tall, grey rock face. The rock reaches up to the sky and as you run towards it you are instantly shaded from the burning rays of the sun. The shade cools your scorched skin.

You begin to walk around the rock to see if there is an entrance. Your mouth is bone dry. You find a small entrance and slowly make your way in, hoping to find some cool, fresh water to drink. Imagine the feeling as you move around inside the cool cave, gentle shafts of light stream through gaps in the roof and you can hear the drip, drip, dripping sound of running water. You begin to search for the water. Your feet are scorched and all you want is to quench your thirst.

Imagine you come across a tree bearing large, ripe, yellow lemons. Just imagine that to quench your thirst you take one of the waxy lemons in your hand, imagine holding it up to your nose and smell the scent of the fresh fruit. Then in an absolute frenzy, to quench your thirst, you take the fruit in your hands, think of that amazing smell, and tear it open. Imagine as you do that, a squirt of the refreshing, zesty juice hits your lips and mouth. Remember that amazing fresh flavor. In an instance, the taste radiates throughout your body, and then you bite into the juicy fruit. The taste is deliciously refreshing. Your mouth is filled with saliva and in an instant your thirst is totally quenched.

### **Your response**

1. Did you imagine the taste of the lemon in your mouth?
2. Was there saliva in your mouth at the end of the exercise?
3. At some point in the exercise did you imagine that your mouth was dry?

The brain, or our imagination, will respond to whatever we tell it. It cannot differentiate between what is true or false. The brain will always create a response to whatever we feed it. In this exercise we told the brain that it was tasting a lemon, so the brain responded by creating the necessary response throughout our physiological system to activate our internal pharmacy and drive mechanism that creates saliva in our mouths.

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Let's imagine that each day we tell our brain we are feeling low, depressed, frightened or sad. Can you imagine what physiological response these thoughts have on your emotions and feelings? Many of us aren't aware of what we are thinking. It's important that we analyze our thoughts on a conscious and sub conscious level and we must correct these thoughts to ensure that we feel okay every day.

This exercise was a revelation to me! For the first time, I could see how my mind could control my emotions. I realized that I could control my energy levels, my wellbeing, my health and my confidence. The way I felt was actually being driven by the thoughts I was thinking about myself and my life each day.