

Book Reviews

Peale, Norman Vincent, HOW TO MAKE POSITIVE IMAGING WORK FOR YOU. Pawling, New York: Foundation for Christian Living, 1982. Paper, \$7.95.

The main idea of *How to Make Positive Imaging Work for You* has been around for a long time. Psychologists and motivational speakers have taught the concept using other names such as "self-talk," "psycho-cybernetics," "visioning," and "imagineering." The underlying theme comes from the Bible, as a person "thinks in his heart, so is he (NKJV)."

Norman Vincent Peale defines "imaging" as the "forming of mental pictures or images... based on the principle that there is a deep tendency in human nature to ultimately become precisely like that which we imagine or image ourselves as being." Peale says we go a step beyond positive thinking when we image. "In imaging, one does not think merely about a hoped-for goal; one 'sees' or visualizes it with tremendous intensity, reinforced by prayer."

Some discount Dr. Peale's contributions. I carefully examined his ideas and explanations to make sure they did not compromise ideas I have that are rooted in Scripture. A couple of his illustrations could be interpreted as going beyond Adventist doctrine with respect to life after death. However, if they are read in the context of Adventism, the illustrations should not prevent us from benefiting from the rest of his ideas.

In chapter 1, Dr. Peale cautions: "Imaging is not a magic formula that simply, by some kind of mental trick, brings desired results." He says imaging opens doors to the future, but once they are open, there must be "discipline, determination, patience, and persistence if the problem is to be solved or the dream to become a reality."

Following each chapter, Dr. Peale summarizes the contents using an "action outline." The first item in the outline is the key thought of the chapter. Following this, there are four or five brief idea statements to remember.

With the advent of Project Affirmation, Peale's book can help teachers and constituents learn how to vision, the term we use for imaging as we try to set new patterns in Adventist education.

Dr. Peale says his book out of more than 50 years of helping people in distress. As an outgrowth of this experience, he is convinced of the following three theses:

1. Every human being is endowed with an enormous problem-solving potential.
2. Problems are an essential and indispensable ingredient of life.
3. The basic tools for solving problems are available to everyone.

It is natural to assume that Dr. Peale believes imaging is one of problem-solving's most basic tools. He offers a caution, however:

Make the Lord a silent partner in all forms of imaging, because He is the touchstone that will keep your desires on the high plane of morality where they belong... Praying about goals is essential, because if there are any selfish aims or sinful motives, they will appear as you pray.

Chapter 8 lists "The Three Biggest Steps on the Road to Success." The key thought sets the tone for the chapter: "Imaging can help you be successful in the areas of goal setting, conviction building, and action taking." When we master these areas we are well on our way to fulfilling our potential. The 14 pages of chapter 8 are worth the price of the entire book.

Other especially helpful chapters include chapter 4, "How Imaging Helps to Bolster a Shaky Ego"; chapter 11, "The Healing Power of Forgiveness"; chapter 13, "How to Deepen Your Faith"; and chapter 16, "The Most Important Image of All."

Chapter 16 tells the story of a visit to a tattoo shop in Hong Kong. One of the shop's designs was "Born to Lose."

"Why on earth," asked Dr. Peale, "would anyone want to be branded with a gloomy slogan like that?"

The old Chinese man shrugged and said: "Before tattoo on chest, tattoo on mind!"

Throughout his book Dr. Peale draws word pictures to show us how to formulate the most important image of all—beholding Christ so completely that His life becomes ours.—Clarence Dunbebin.

Dr. Clarence Dunbebin is Associate Superintendent of Education, Potomac Conference of SDA, Staunton, Virginia, and book review editor of the JOURNAL.

Smalley, Gary, and John Trent, THE BLESSING. Nashville, Tenn.: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1986. Hardbound, 238 pages, \$13.45.

This book presents the biblical concept of "the blessing"—the knowledge that someone loves and accepts us unconditionally. It goes on to discuss its relevance to modern-day relationships. Because of strong familial attachments we long to feel the blessing of our parents and feel a void when it is absent. "The blessing is not just an important tool for parents to use," say the authors. It is of critical importance for anyone who desires to draw close to another person.

The authors present in a step-by-step approach, how to be a blessing and how to give the blessing to others. They list five elements of the blessing: (1) meaningful touch, (2) a spoken word, (3) attaching high value to the one being blessed, (4) picturing a special future for the one being blessed, and (5) an active commitment to fulfill the blessing. Each element is thoroughly discussed through the use of real-life experiences, thereby providing the reader with a vivid word picture.

After describing each element in detail, the authors list the most common home settings that withhold the blessing. The final phase of the book is devoted to the topic of giving blessing to others.

This book offers practical, concrete suggestions to use in interpersonal relationships. Regardless of the type of relationship (parent/child, sibling, friend, teacher/student), following the concept of "the blessing" will enhance the quality of the association.—Wendy Pega.

Wendy Pega is Principal of Beltsville Adventist School, Beltsville, Maryland.

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**Woodsy Owl for
Clean Air**

**Give a hoot.
Don't pollute.**

Forest Service, U.S.D.A.

