

● Your Perfectly Organized Life

# Visualize your way to Success and happiness!

Visualization—a kind of dress rehearsal for your brain—is study-proven to help you do everything from whittle your waistline to propel you up the job ladder, says Rosalene Glickman, Ph.D., author of *Optimal Thinking*. Turns out, imagining a positive experience in detail tricks your brain into believing it really happened, which, in turn, boosts your confidence, quashes stress and helps make your dreams a reality!

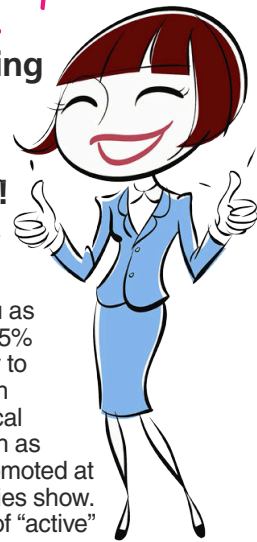


✓ **Get a promotion by . . .**

**Imagining taking free throws!**

Picturing athletic success makes you as much as 25% more likely to accomplish non-physical goals, such as getting promoted at work, studies show. This type of “active” visualization improves your ability to plan and strategize, explains Glickman. Seeing yourself engaged in an activity that requires sharp hand-eye coordination, such as swooshing a free throw or serving a tennis ace, requires attention to detail, which increases focus and confidence!

● **To boost the benefit:** Imagine every sensory detail: If you’re taking free throws, for example, concentrate on how the ball feels in your hands and hear the sound it makes as you bounce it on the court. Pay attention to another thing too: the applauding crowd! In one study, simply imagining the sound of praise boosted people’s self-esteem, leading to more on-the-job success.

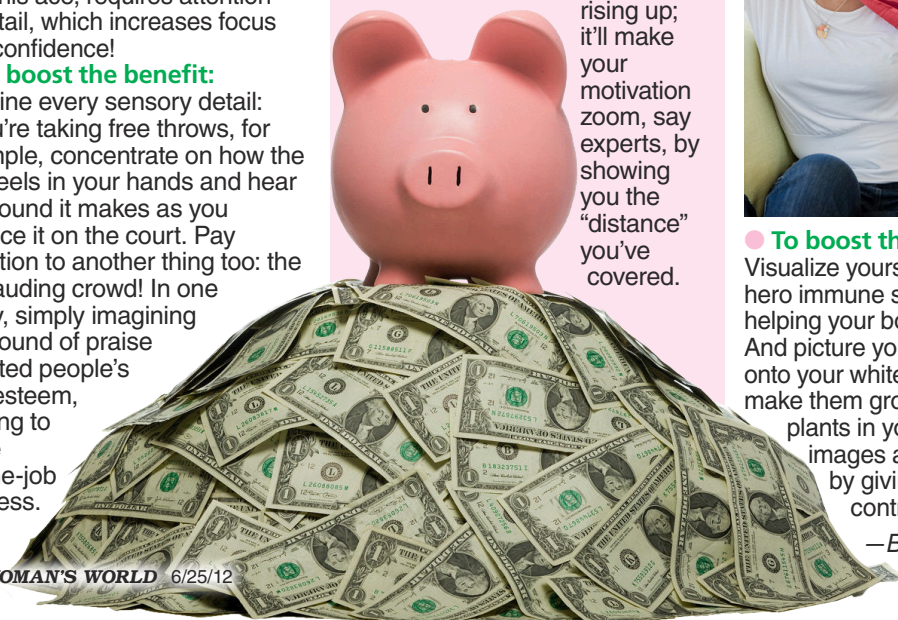


✓ **Save for your dream vacation by . . .**

**Seeing your piggy bank fill up!**

Spend a few minutes picturing your piggy bank getting fatter—until it’s more than half full—and you’ll almost double your chances of meeting your long-term financial goals, a new study reveals. The image of growth—your piggy bank getting stuffed—is so uplifting, it triggers activity in your brain’s reward centers, giving you an immediate incentive to go for your goals.

● **To boost the benefit:** Every time you imagine putting extra cash aside, picture yourself depositing an individual coin in your imaginary piggy bank; the coin gives your image detail and focus. You’ll feel an immediate sense of satisfaction that’ll encourage more saving! Another trick: Think of a bar graph slowly rising up; it’ll make your motivation zoom, say experts, by showing you the “distance” you’ve covered.



✓ **Disease-proof yourself by . . .**

**Visualizing “flying” white cells!**

Imagine your immune system as a superhero—complete with a billowing red cape! Such positive imagery really does translate to better health by relaxing you and reducing the stress hormones that contribute to disease. The proof: In a Danish study, when college students envisioned a “muscular” immune system, their number of illness-zapping white blood cells soared!



● **To boost the benefit:** Visualize yourself as your superhero immune system’s “sidekick,” helping your body repel invaders. And picture yourself pouring water onto your white blood cells to make them grow strong like the plants in your garden. Both images amp up the benefits by giving you a sense of control over your health.

—Barbara Hustedt Crook

✓ **Lose 10 pounds by . . .**

**Picturing yourself pigging out!**

Eyeing a bowl of M&M’s? Before you reach for some, take a minute to imagine yourself popping candy after candy, advise Carnegie Mellon University researchers. In their recent study, people who pictured themselves repeatedly indulging in a sweet treat ended up eating half as much of the real thing as those who visualized themselves savoring only a small portion. Repetition, explain researchers, is essential; it’s what fools your brain into believing you’ve had enough!

● **To boost the benefit:** “Feel the food on your tongue—the texture, the taste,” advises hypnotherapist Kerstin Sjoquist (BlissTrips.com). And imagine swallowing: It’ll make your visualization feel more real—just as real as your curbed appetite!



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