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Mental Imagery as a Complementary Clinical Tool

Mental imagery (MI), a cognitive-perceptual construct, is formed by internal schemas of movements and mental representations of objects. As an input to cognitive processing, the imagery representations embedded have long been recognized in complementary-alternate medicine for their potential in healing and recovery. Emerging out of its roots in the oriental (Hinduism-Buddhism) meditation and Yoga practices, MI has been used in training mindfulness and focused attention. MI is also known to modulate the brain's underlying neuronal circuitry with significant implications for brain reorganization and improved well-being performance. The effectiveness of MI as a therapeutic tool has also been documented in the treatment of a variety of illnesses including pain perception, depression, hypertension, and anxiety. The processes of visualization and identification in MI have promoted activation in uncharted brain regions, which turn out to be stimulated by the training of kindness and compassion. This presentation will focus on its potential application for language treatment.