

VisionNews

Vision Education Centre

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Dear friends,

The deadline for applications for the upcoming **Vision Educator Training** is 15 December. If you are considering joining us or know others who might be, please let me know soon. I would be happy to send information in the mail, or you can get the information and a downloadable application form on the Vision Educator Training page of our website: www.visioneducators.com.

Please note that there is a requirement that those who want to become Vision Educators have some experience with the process of improving their own vision. On the Class Schedule you will find that there is a Level One Weekend Workshop coming up on 3 & 4 February. This would be a good workshop to attend if you are applying for the training that begins in March.

There has been some welcome response to my request for contributions to the newsletter, and you will find them in this issue. It would be great to hear from those of you who would like to share what you are learning about yourself and your vision in the next newsletter.

I hope you will pass this newsletter on to anyone you think might be interested, and it would be a pleasure to see you soon.
My very best wishes to you all!

Elizabeth Abraham

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'As soon as the defective organs of vision acquire a certain degree of what I have called dynamic relaxation, flashes of almost or completely normal vision are experienced...As the art of dynamic relaxation is more and more completely acquired, as habits of improper use are replaced by better habits, as visual functioning improves, the flashes of better vision become more frequent and of longer duration, until at last they coalesce into a continuous state of normal seeing.'

The Art of Seeing: An Adventure in Re-education
Aldous Huxley

MAKING IT YOUR OWN

Many people begin natural vision improvement lessons with great enthusiasm, but later report that they 'don't have time for it'. It is true that most of us are very busy these days and feel a lot of pressure to do more and more. We often end up exhausted and overwhelmed by the end of the day. If this is the case, then it is easy to see how thinking that we have to fit another whole program into our life would seem more than we could bear.

The truth is, however, that what is necessary is a period of re-education during which time the entire visual system is encouraged to return to good habits of use - a state that Huxley calls 'dynamic relaxation'. It is not a matter of doing more work.

How do we release deeply ingrained habits of tension? Repeating new habits of ease often enough until they become automatic, is often a successful approach. If we are expecting ourselves to do a whole lot of activities we find tedious or impractical in our lifestyles, we are obviously not going to do them often enough to affect a change.

The key is in making this approach your own.

For instance, on the Vision Walk this summer we were walking with 3x2" pieces of black paper taped to the centre of our foreheads. E.K., one of the vision students who came on the walk, found that when she removed the paper her vision was clearer and her eyes felt refreshed and relaxed. Fantastic discovery! However, she didn't always have a black patch available when her eyes were tired and blurry.

After the walk I received an email from her saying that when she is walking her dog and has no black patch with her, she creates the same effect by holding one hand between her eyes and blocking off the central vision that way. Brilliant! She understood that the benefit came from blocking off the central vision so that it could rest, and stimulating the peripheral vision by being aware of the apparent movement of things on either side as she walked, and

she figured out how to achieve that end in a way that was practical for her.

We need to encourage good vision habits every day all day long. If you have discovered ways to do this in your life, please let me know and I will put your discoveries into the next newsletter so that we can all benefit.

VISION STUDENTS' PERSONAL STORIES

From J. B., Toronto Ontario:

I can summarize my story this way. I started needing corrective lenses when I was 13. My vision got steadily worse up until my twenties, with prescriptions of -6.00 per eye, plus a prism in each eye to help with focusing. I noticed that every time I got a stronger prescription my eyes got more dependent and weaker, but I didn't know there was another way. I started taking your courses 3 years ago, and I have done the Introduction and Level 1 and 2. I do exercises every day, but I admit there were stretches of months when I didn't do any official eye exercises. What I found was after doing relaxing and focusing exercises for months, my eyes began to see in a more relaxed way. I also knew when my eyes were stressed because my vision would get blurry and tired. I used to get headaches and would have to sleep when my eyes were tired, but that doesn't happen any more. I have taken care of my health in other ways as well - but the vision also provides feedback when I am angry, or sad, or have a lot of sudden stress. The biggest help was having a weaker prescription for computer work and reading. I can actually feel my eyes relaxing when I use the computer now! My prescription has dropped from -6.00 in both eyes to -4.50 and -4.75 in just 3 years, and my weaker prescription for reading is -3.75 for the right eye and -4.00 for the left.

From S. B., Ottawa Ontario

I am a forty year old male with myopia and astigmatism. Several weeks ago I went to see Estelle Saunders, my optometrist. I told her I was again interested in a reduced prescription for computer work, which she gave me. At our appointment she mentioned that she had heard of a number of cases where people had very good success with clearing up their vision by wearing pinhole glasses. I took her advice to heart and started wearing the pinhole glasses I had purchased a number of years earlier. I realized that if I wanted to get some real benefit, I would have to integrate wearing them into my daily life. Consequently, I decided I would wear them at home, where I spend a good part of my day. Upon wearing them for several hours the first day, I felt my eyes were very active - lots of movement to capture the images through the pinholes. I was

surprised that evening that my eyes were not tired, as they more typically are. On the second day, I had unresolved emotional flashes from 20 years ago. The movements my eyes were making were totally foreign to me and left me feeling unsettled and off balance. I felt very vulnerable and also strangely child like - as if I was again a five year old. I also realized I was coming up with creative ideas in the kitchen when I was cooking. New ideas jumped out at me, where usually the activity would be very mundane. I have continued to wear my pinholes for several hours a day. I find I have had to add a lot of artificial light to the room I am working in, because the glasses block out most of it. I do notice the eyes blink and move more behind the pinholes. As well, when I do the acupuncture points around the eyes, the discomfort is significantly less. I am committed to continuing to wear the pinhole glasses and would suggest to anyone starting to wear them, to build up the time you wear them. My experiences for the first two days were a bit on the intense side (although also very memorable).

MOTIVATION TO TEACH

During the **Vision Educator Training** your own vision and life will benefit as you practice teaching others the things you are learning. Even if you are not intending to take the training, teaching others the techniques you are learning will help you as much as it helps them - a win/win experience!

Studies on the retention rate of information we take in have shown that on average we retain approximately **5%** of information from listening to **Lectures**, **10%** from **Reading**, **20%** from **Audio-visual presentations**, **30%** from **Demonstrations**, **50%** from **Discussion Groups**, **75%** from **Practice by Doing** and **90%** by **Immediate Use of Learning** - teaching others what you have learned.

This is why it is often said: 'People teach what they need to know'. Some people feel that they are not entitled to teach until they are 'experts' in the field, not until they have perfected their own knowledge do they feel qualified to pass it on.

The truth is, however, that what ever the field and however long you have been in it there is always more to discover. If you have an open mind you will be aware that there is more you don't know about yourself, others, the world and how it operates than the things you do know. This is what makes life continually interesting and magical.

When a teacher is willing to discuss his/her process of learning, listen with interest and compassion to the struggles of the students and at the same time pass on what he/she has discovered, he/she is continually learning in the process of teaching.