

VisionNews

Vision Education Centre

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Dear friends,

The last weekend workshop I am teaching this year will be held at a beautiful country property near Stouffville - just north of Toronto - at the end of June. These workshops out of town are like a **holiday with a purpose** - an opportunity to relax and have fun while learning about how to connect with your eyes and improve your vision. If you would like to come or know anyone who would benefit from a whole weekend of taking care of their eyes, please let me know.

Another exciting event is the next **Vision Educator Training**. My colleague, Rosemary Gaddum Gordon, and I have now set the dates. The last training was held in Toronto. This one will take place in Eliot, Maine beginning in September of 2011. I know it sounds like a long way away, but since the training takes a whole year to complete, participants need time to prepare their schedules for it. The details are now on the Vision Educator Training Institute page of our website at www.visioneducators.com.

With love and best wishes,

Elizabeth

Elizabeth Abraham

The Way It Is

William Stafford

There's a thread you follow. It goes among
things that change. But it doesn't change.
People wonder about what you are pursuing.
You have to explain about the thread.
But it is hard for others to see.
While you hold it you can't get lost.
Tragedies happen; people get hurt
or die; and you suffer and get old.
Nothing you do can stop time's unfolding.
You don't ever let go of the thread.

'The intuitive mind is a sacred gift and the rational mind is its faithful servant. We have created a society that honors the servant and has forgotten the gift.'

Albert Einstein 1879 -1955

GLASSES AND THEIR USE

Becoming free of prescription lenses is a different experience for everybody. Here are a couple of stories and reports from vision students to illustrate this point. I hope you find these helpful. I'm sure that each of you has your own story.

STORY OF A HARD CORE GLASSES USER

Amy was six years old when she was first given glasses. She had not been able to see clearly either near or far for as long as she could remember, and was astounded by how different the world looked through her new glasses. She was told to wear them all the time, so she dutifully put them on first thing in the morning and took them off last thing at night. At first when she looked at herself in the mirror she could hardly recognize herself, but after a surprisingly short time the glasses became part of her. If she didn't have them on she felt naked, exposed, and vulnerable. She liked the clarity she saw through the lenses. The feeling she had without a protective barrier between herself and other people soon became uncomfortably unfamiliar.

When she was a teenager however, she began to wish she didn't need glasses. She was physically very active and they were a nuisance. She was always afraid of losing or breaking them. She wanted contact lenses, but the doctor said she would not be able to wear them because of the dryness of her eyes. Her mother found out about someone who could teach her to see without glasses. She began going to lessons every week.

As she learned how to rest her eyes and get them moving more freely, she felt how stiff and tired her eye muscles were. During her vision lessons it was necessary for her to do a number of activities without glasses. She soon noticed with surprise that her eyes actually felt much better when she wasn't wearing them. With the encouragement of her teacher she began to eat meals without her glasses. She found she could even catch a ball without them, walk down the street in her own neighbourhood, and chat with her friends. She was much encouraged, and soon found that her glasses felt too strong when she put them on again. Her teacher gave her the name of an eye doctor who would give her a weaker prescription than the one she was used to.

At first, she could not see clearly enough through the new glasses. She squinted and strained to see. Her teacher taught her to relax her eyes instead of tensing them when things were blurry. After a few months her eyes improved so much that the new glasses were as strong as the old ones used to be. She again got a weaker prescription. She began to wear her glasses only when she really needed them at school. She knew that her vision would continue to improve.

STORY OF A HARD CORE GLASSES HATER

When she was 12 years old, Deirdre could no longer see the board clearly at school. She was taken to an eye doctor and told she had to wear glasses all the time. She was devastated. She hated wearing glasses, but did as she was told. During her teenage years, however, there are no family photos in which she is wearing glasses. She always removed them. She believed they made her look ugly.

Her eyesight continued to get worse and her glasses stronger. Eventually, when she was 30 years old, she got contact lenses. She now felt better about her looks, but the lenses often irritated her eyes. When she was in her forties, she heard of someone who had improved his vision naturally. She firmly believed that she, also, could be free of the need for corrective lenses. She flushed her contact lenses down the toilet and gave up her addiction to vision correction 'cold turkey'.

As time went on, she heard of many other people who had stopped wearing glasses and whose vision had improved. Deirdre went regularly for vision lessons. She enjoyed doing Palming, Swinging and other activities every day, and practiced incorporating good vision habits into her life. She became aware that her eyes did not work together, so she focused on activities to help her gain binocularity. She was happy not to be dependent on lenses any more, but had to admit that in spite of everything she was doing, her eyesight was not improving as much as she had hoped.

Deirdre began reading more about natural vision improvement. She came to understand that the perpetual tension she felt in her body must also be affecting the muscles around her eyes. She learned that the images of light coming in through the eyes are interpreted in the brain, and realized that the underlying anxiety in her mind must be affecting the way her visual cortex processed the information.

She practiced massage and movement activities to release the tension from her face, and started dancing more often to relax her whole body. She also learned to meditate to calm her mind. During this process she became more aware of how her own habits of thinking and the way she lived her life were contributing to her tension. She began to make changes toward living her life more in alignment with her own needs than with the needs of others. As she saw more clearly who she was and how she could live with less tension, bit by bit her vision began to improve.

REPORTS FROM STUDENTS

HARD CORE BATES

by Jane Martin

As way of thanking Elizabeth Abraham on the occasion of the second to last issue of her newsletter, I am sending along my Bates story.

In 2002 I suffered a head injury in a car crash. When I came to, I had double vision. The neurologist said that there was nothing to be done about it. Perhaps I could try prism glasses. I did. I am a visual artist. I do very fine work. Prism glasses were not an option. An Ottawa artist friend who had tripped over a chord in her studio while running for the telephone broke her face and got double vision. She went to the best eye surgeon in Toronto who told her there was

nothing to be done. Perhaps she could try prism glasses. She too tried them. They were not an option. Her Alexander teacher told her about Elizabeth Abraham. We both went to Elizabeth, I for a few years. As I was quite disabled, stupid and tired for three years after the crash, I had lots of time on my hands; and lots of determination to draw again. I told Elizabeth I wanted to read Bates's *magnum opus*. She lent me her copy.

Bates told me to throw away my glasses, so out went the reading glasses I had been wearing for twenty years. I spent my two week vacation that summer reading *Perfect Sight Without Glasses* initially one word at a time while sitting in direct sunlight, wiggling, bending and flapping the pages to get brief moments of perfect clarity. Eventually I could read several lines at a time. Then whole pages were clear. I could read them even in the shade by then. After more time with Elizabeth I had no double vision. Without glasses except for drawing that is. I didn't have the confidence to attempt drawing without my 2.0 reading glasses.

I was in the habit of putting my glasses on just before I started to draw. One day I was struck by how well I was seeing. When I put my hand up to remove my reading glasses I discovered to my shock that I hadn't been wearing them. I panicked, denied the evident perfect vision I had been experiencing, and put on my glasses. When I removed the glasses after awhile and looked at the drawing again it was a blur. The glasses had indeed made my vision worse.

I'm a Bates hard liner because Bates was right. As long as the quitting smoker sneaks cigarettes, no matter how few a day, the quitting takes forever. You have to go cold turkey. Don't keep leaning on your glasses. Take the plunge. Trust your eyes. Trust Elizabeth. Trust yourself. Do your work. Spend the time. It has been worth it for me.
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FROM D. J.

It has been a while since I've come to Toronto for a lesson. However, I've been working at improving my vision on and off (or maybe the better phrase would be 'not working' at seeing) with great results. I recently purchased my 3rd pair of reduced glasses roughly cutting my original prescription in half (Old: -6, -5; New: -3.75, -2.75).

After an initial re-adjustment period, I'm happy to report that I can see quite clearly when relaxed and when I allow images to come to me as opposed to really reaching out and grabbing them with my eyes. I'm thrilled! I'm spending a fair amount of time without the glasses, especially outside where it is easier to see with such abundant light. Looking forward to the day when I might be able to leave the glasses behind for good. I still can't quite see my computer clearly enough without the glasses, but the glasses actually seem a bit much too. Perhaps I should get a pair of lower prescription computer glasses?

Reply from Elizabeth: Yes, by all means get a weaker prescription for the computer. The glasses you use for distance are probably too strong for close up, and will slow down your improvement.