

VisionNews

Newsletter published by the **Vision Education Centre** 339 Bloor St W #215 Toronto M5S 1W7 416-599-9202
Issue #26 January 2004

Dear friends,

Many thanks to those of you who responded to my request for information on how you are doing with your vision! Some of your responses are included here. Please keep on keeping in touch. It is great to hear from you.

You will also find in this issue: information about the next Vision Education Teacher Training, the next Natural Vision Conference in California, and a new workshop on Empathic Listening.

I would very much appreciate it if you would post or pass on the enclosed Introductory Class flyer, so that as many people as possible have an opportunity to attend.

The schedule of classes is also included. I hope to see you soon.

My very best wishes to all of you for happiness and success in 2004!

Elizabeth

Elizabeth Abraham

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'The retina, the sensory nerve layer of the eye, contains light-receptor cells of which approximately 95% are rods and 5% cones. The rods are distributed around the periphery of the retina and are stimulated best under dim light conditions. The cones are grouped in a small area of the retina called the fovea centralis and require bright light for stimulation. Major concentration on the fovea for reading in a two-dimensional field is called foveal focus....

Considering the ratio of cones to rods, it strikes me that we were not designed to sit for long hours engaged exclusively in foveal focus activities like reading, watching TV or computer screens. The eyes need to actively experience the world as a whole, for vision to develop fully. Active sensory and motor functioning of the eyes helps to entrain the body on shapes and movement of natural forms, and to develop the spatial awareness necessary for clear perceptions and thought.'

Smart Moves by Carla Hannaford

KEEPING IN TOUCH

Thanks to all of you for your observations, and willingness to share your awareness. Please keep it coming so that we can inspire each other in this important work.

Susanne emailed me after her summer vacation to say that although she used to wear glasses all the time, she went to Ireland and did a two-week bicycle tour without glasses! She says: 'I was really amazed at how much I was able to see without my glasses'.

Sharon, who had been wearing a reduced prescription for several months and at the same time practicing good vision habits, found that her vision had improved by 2 diopters when she went for her next check up! Both her optometrist and the optician were: 'surprised and impressed'.

Karen let me know about an article written by a doctor, on neck and shoulder pain. She says: 'The doctor who wrote it thinks that much of this pain is related to sleeping position. If you sleep on your side and your head is not supported correctly, there is pressure on a spot inside the collar bone, and the lower three vertebrae of the neck can be out of alignment all night. He says this crunched spot is the source of pain that can refer all the way through the neck, shoulder, and down the arm into the elbow, wrist and hand!

The solution is to sleep on your side with your pillow tucked right down into the crease between your body and your neck, so that the entire space is filled and your neck is supported correctly. You have to pull your pillow right into your collar bone.' Karen says this really works! As we know, neck tension often contributes to eye tension.

Paul emailed to say that this vision work is: 'A godsend for the eyes of the world!'

Carolyn finds the acupressure facial massage particularly helpful. She says it is something she can easily fit it into her regular routine.

Janet let me know that after her vision lesson she changed her diet to focus on finding the correct acid/alkaline balance and best nutrition for herself, and that it 'helped enormously'. She found that her vision stabilized.

In the last newsletter I talked a bit about what Dr Bates refers to as 'central fixation' - the fact that the eyes see best exactly where they are looking, and see everything else less clearly. That point of clarity is very small, so in order to see a whole object clearly, the eyes need to move rapidly and easily all over the object of attention. Peripheral vision provides balance and support for the clear central vision.

Nathan wrote: 'I just wanted to share an 'eye opening' experience I had at the supermarket today. I was looking at an item and it suddenly occurred to me to try looking at it and ignoring what was going on around me. The thought then jumped into my head that if I were to do that, how could I keep an eye on the other customers in case one of them was going to run into me with their shopping cart, or threaten me in some other way?

It hit me in a flash what attitude I was carrying with me in order to block myself from central fixation. I am afraid to concentrate my attention on one area and let others fall into the background because I feel I have to 'keep my eye on' what's going on around me. I fear attack from my surroundings.

I also realize that putting my visual attention on what I am looking at means putting all of my mind's attention on what I am looking at instead of only the part of my attention that is restricted to vision. To put this into practice I am going to be aware when looking at something that I need to actually trust my environment - trust that my peripheral vision will alert me if something untoward is going on.

If I am doing an exercise of seeing one letter in a word more clearly than the two on either side, I will include the awareness that I need to let go of my suspicious awareness of my surroundings at that moment and get 'lost' in the letter I am gazing at.

Ironically, myopia is a poor method of keeping alert to unexpected danger. The pattern recognition of relaxed peripheral awareness is the better system by far.'

VISION EDUCATION SUPPORT GROUP

Interested in a vision support group? Susanne Marquardt is hosting a group at 2pm on the second Sunday of every month. The address is 135 Pearson Avenue. Please call Susanne at 416-535-753 to let her know you would like to attend. What a great idea! If anyone else is interested in forming a support group

at another time, please let me know and I'll announce it in the next newsletter. It is certainly helpful to have others with whom to practice and share experiences on this fascinating journey.

VISION EDUCATION TEACHER TRAINING

The long-awaited Vision Education Teacher Training will be held at the Windsong Retreat Center near Raleigh, North Carolina. The dates are: 3-6 September and 4-7 November 2004, 6-9 January, 3-6 March, 12-15 May and 14-17 July 2005.

The tuition is \$5,200 US. Travel expenses, lodging and books are extra.

The faculty for this **Vision Educator Training Institute** course will be Rosemary Gaddum Gordon and Martha Rigney. For more information and to receive an application package, please contact: Rosemary Gaddum Gordon
Lightwater, 17 Mast Cove Road,
Eliot, Maine, USA 03903
207-439-9821

Or get in touch with Elizabeth Abraham at the contact information on this newsletter.

NATURAL VISION CONFERENCE

The next Natural Vision Conference will be held in Oakland California on 22 & 23 May 2004. The San Francisco Conference last year was a huge success, and this one is being organized by some of the same people. For more information please contact: Kate Keilman at 415-381-4560 or Dror Schneider at 415-643-1786/415-643-1782 fax or Theo Copley at 510-486-8324.

WORKSHOP IN EMPATHIC LISTENING

Have you ever felt that one part of you wanted to do something - improve your vision, for instance - and another part just didn't want to bother? Do people you care about sometimes say to you: 'You never listen to me!?' Do you sometimes have difficulty knowing what you really want?

Being able to listen to ourselves and others with empathy and compassion is a wonderful skill. It is a skill that few people have, and that anyone can learn. Check out the enclosed Class Schedule for the upcoming workshop.