

# VisionNews

Newsletter published by the **Vision Education Centre** 339 Bloor St W #215 Toronto M5S 1W7 416-599-9202  
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## Dear friends,

Spring is in the air in Toronto at last! Yeah!

Many of you have asked me for a referral to an optometrist who will give reduced prescriptions. I have compiled a list of the supportive optometrists I am aware of in Canada. If you know of others, please tell me and I will add them to the list. You will find the list on the back of the Class Schedule.

Are you in the holistic health field and looking for an adjunct to your existing career and skill set? You will find information about the next Vision Education Teacher Training, in this issue.

I have enclosed an Introductory Class flyer for those of you in the Toronto area. I would really appreciate it if you would post it or pass it on, so that as many people as possible can learn about this work. Thank you.

My very best wishes to all of you!

*Elizabeth*

Elizabeth Abraham

.....  
**‘Being listened to spells the difference between feeling accepted and feeling isolated.’**

**‘Effective listening - empathic listening - promotes growth in the listener, the one listened to, and the relationship between them.’**

**‘Listening better requires not only a greater openness to others but also a greater reflective awareness of ourselves.’**

*The Lost Art of Listening* by Michael Nichols

**‘The essence of achieving good vision is the readiness to see yourself as you really are - a kind and good person.’**

**‘Clarity is accurate perceiving by looking through your heart.’**

**‘Seeing clearly and being focused means discovering your secret purpose for living.’**  
*The Power Behind Your Eyes* by R.M.Kaplan

## GUILT WILL GET YOU NOWHERE!

In the last couple of issues of this newsletter, I have included quotes from vision students who have written to tell me about their progress. Many people have phoned or emailed to say how inspiring they find these ‘testimonials’.

Others have said that when they read what success some people are having, they feel guilty that they are not ‘doing their eye exercises’. They say that they would like to come and take lessons with me again, but feel guilty that they are not putting into practice what I have already shown them. They do not want to come and admit their failure to me, the teacher, so they stay away.

I can certainly understand this attitude, as I have held it myself, but the question is: ‘does it help your vision?’ Which is more empowering: ‘I am so ashamed that I am not doing what I wanted to do’, or ‘I haven’t done what I wanted to do. Now what?’

The Bates Method is about gradually incorporating good vision habits into our lives. It is true that it will only work if you do it, but habits seem to need time and gentleness in order change. I see myself as a facilitator, willing to help you in your own process, rather than as a teacher who is going to judge you for ‘not trying hard enough’. It is very often trying too hard that started our poor vision habits in the first place!

In my work with my own vision, as well as with my students, I have found that the most useful attitude is one of compassion. We need to see that we are doing the best we can do any given moment. At times we practice faithfully, at times we don’t. At times our vision is clear, at times it is not. I notice that my vision is more clear when my mind is relaxed than it is when I am negatively judging myself, so I tend to spend time on those activities which help me relax and accept myself. I have discovered that when I am resisting something, it is more productive to attempt to understand the resistance than it is to beat myself up about it.

When vision is blurry, it is a reminder to relax, let go of fear, tension, and the need to rush. In that way, blurry vision is a gift. Sometimes I resist the

reminder, sometimes I get back on track.

If you need help getting back on track, please call and set up an appointment, or come to one of the upcoming workshops or series of classes.

### **WORKSHOP OPEN TO EVERYONE:**

#### **LISTENING AND BEING HEARD**

Being able to listen to ourselves and others with empathy and compassion is a truly valuable skill. Listening well, like seeing clearly, is a skill that can be learned. Many of us have learned **not** to listen to ourselves and our own needs, and not to **really** listen to others. We are often lost in our own thoughts and reactions as people speak to us, rather than paying attention to what they are actually saying. How many of us have been told by our children, our parents and other loved ones, by co-workers or friends: 'You never listen to me!'

This workshop is an introduction to listening in a new way - listening to the message behind the words, listening to what we know in a larger sense. It is my own approach to the art and skill of listening, based on the work of Eugene Gendlin, Adele Faber & Elaine Mazlish, and Michael Nichols. See the enclosed Class Schedule for details.

#### **NEW LEVEL 2 WORKSHOP: REVIEW AND RENEW**

This is a new workshop, designed for those who have some experience working with various vision activities and techniques, but who need new ideas and inspiration. Maybe you have been practicing what you learned, but it is not working in the way you hoped it would. Maybe you hoped you would practice, but find you are not. Maybe you want to get together with a group of like-minded individuals to explore how you can most benefit from this work.

This is a one day workshop being held on Ward's Island. Give yourself the gift of a day 'away from it all'. See the Class Schedule for details.

#### **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.*

**Carol** wrote to let me know that she has been practicing her new vision habits daily, and is very happy with the results. Here is an excerpt: *'I enjoy sewing. I was quite dismayed to admit to myself that threading a needle presented more than a little frustration. Even the largest needle-eyes presented a problem. Then I just forgot about it, as nothing needed stitching, until I discovered a curtain*

*hem was coming down. Without thinking, I got out my sewing kit, chose the tiniest needle for this intricate work, and lo and behold, no problem. I had to change the thread four times, and did so easily. I still have not filled the prescription I was given for bifocals, and maybe I will never have to.'*

**Pierre** wrote: *'Thank you for your newsletter. Your input and that of others is often inspiring in attitude, refreshing in faith of vision techniques and stimulating in my personal practices. Thank you to all my brothers and sisters for believing in, what is in the end, 'yourselves'; we have all the tools: the techniques, the abilities, the attitudes, the faith, so lets use them and practice; it's the only way we can get results. Thank you again to our 'vision family' for having the 'vision' and for keeping it alive and clear.*

#### **VISION EDUCATION TEACHER TRAINING**

Are you interested in a creative, fascinating career in the field of holistic health? You might want to consider training to be a Vision Educator!

The **Vision Educator Training Institute** is offering its next teacher training at the Windsong Retreat Center near Raleigh, North Carolina, during six 4-day weekends. 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.

See our website at: [www.visioneducators.com](http://www.visioneducators.com) for details.

For information and an application package, contact: Rosemary Gaddum Gordon at Lightwater, 17 Mast Cove Road, Eliot, Maine, USA 03903. Phone: 207-439-9821. Or contact Elizabeth Abraham at 416-599-9202

#### **NATURAL VISION CONFERENCE**

You are all invited to the 3rd Natural Vision Conference in Oakland California on 22 & 23 May 2004. There is a full schedule of presentations and workshops during the two days, as well as many post-conference workshops. See the enclosed flyer.

**LATE-BREAKING NEWS:** After printing the Class Schedule, I was invited to teach a weekend workshop in Calgary on 12 & 13 June. If you are interested in details please contact me in Toronto, or Connie-Lynn Sullivan in Calgary at 403-242-1533.