

VisionNews

Newsletter published by the **Vision Education Centre** 339 Bloor St W #215 Toronto M5S 1W7 416-599-9202
Issue #28 August 2004

Dear friends,

I hope you are all enjoying the summer - the trees in leaf, the flowers in bloom, and the warmth of the sun when it does indeed bless us with its presence.

Many of you called to ask whether the traditional Vision Walks on the Island were planned for this summer. I didn't get a newsletter out as I usually do in June, hence no announcement of the Vision Walks. I do hope you visited the Island and its delights with friends and family instead!

I would really appreciate it if those of you in the Toronto area would post or pass on the enclosed information about upcoming Introductory classes. Can you help by putting up multiple flyers? Please let me know and I'll get them to you. Thank you. My very best wishes to all of you!

Elizabeth

Elizabeth Abraham

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'Changing our basic belief systems and attitudes is extremely difficult to accomplish because, for the most part, we tend to be totally unaware of what these core beliefs and attitudes are.'

Stress and Vision - Elliott B. Forrest

'Learning to see, just like learning to walk, read, or ride a bicycle, develops as we interact with the world around us. Learning through this interplay depends on self-observation - our capacity to notice our successes and failures.'

VisionCircles Handbook - Gail and Paul Dennison

'We can consciously think thoughts which disturb the circulation, and lower the visual power; we can also consciously think thoughts that will restore normal circulation, and thereby cure, not only all errors of refraction, but many other abnormal conditions of the eyes. We cannot by any amount of effort make ourselves see, but by learning to control our thoughts we can accomplish that end indirectly.'

The Cure of Imperfect Sight by Treatment Without Glasses - Dr W. H. Bates

SEEING WITH EASE ALL DAY LONG

Good Vision Habits While Reading

- o If you are nearsighted and can read without glasses, experiment with doing so. If not, use a weaker pair than the ones you use for distance.
- o Take frequent breaks. Put your bookmark 2 pages ahead. When you come to it, look up into the distance, take a few deep breaths, and blink gently.
- o Periodically close your eyes for a few moments, palm, and remember what you just read.
- o Experiment with moving your head a little as you read. Think that there is a pencil on the end of your nose, and this nose pencil is underlining the words.
- o Be aware of the white of the page as you read, and the black letters will stand out more clearly.
- o Maintain an awareness of the rest of your body and of your surroundings, even as you concentrate to take in information through your eyes. Are you relaxed, breathing, blinking?
- o Play with sitting back and allowing the words to come to you, rather than going out to grab them.
- o Read in good light, and in sunlight when you can.
- o Experiment with holding the book a little farther away or closer up than you usually would.

THE ART OF SEEING CLEARLY

Learning to see clearly again after many years of blurry vision is indeed, an art. It is necessary to understand the nature of that art, develop skills and techniques that make it possible to use the eyes in a more natural way, be willing to discover and challenge limiting beliefs about our vision, and be motivated to do whatever it takes to see ourselves and the world around us more clearly again.

When we begin the process, it is often very exciting. We realize that we do not have to be completely dependent on our prescription lenses and that, given half a chance our eyes can do more for themselves than we thought they could. As we learn to relax our eyes and introduce more movement, the circulation improves, and our eyes very often feel better than they have done in years. We begin to notice when we are straining and staring, and are able

to start breaking the habit. This in itself is motivating, and we want to tell all our friends about our discovery. This is the honeymoon period that happens with most new things we take up.

But often, after a while, the changes level off, and our enthusiasm wanes. We are at the computer, in the middle of a big project. We know that our eyes respond better if we take frequent breaks, and we know several activities to do during the breaks. But we just can't stop now, or we can't be bothered, or we tell ourselves that it won't do any good anyway or.....! We used to palm every evening before bed, and found that we could sleep better, felt calmer in general, that our eyes and mind were more relaxed and that we functioned better. But a friend is visiting and we decide to watch movies in the evenings. Now it is too late to palm. We justify it, tell ourselves that we will start palming again when the friend leaves. But we don't. We are out of the habit, and soon palming in the evenings takes its place along with all the other things we used to do for ourselves and no longer do.

What stops us from doing the things we want to do for ourselves - the things that don't make any difference to anybody but us? Do we feel we aren't worth the time it takes - that unless we are doing something for someone else, or something we consider productive, we are wasting our time? We often get frustrated because of the length of time it takes to make changes in our lives, and we give up. Or maybe we think that our case is hopeless. Others may change, but we are too lazy, or stupid, or 'too far gone' to improve. Or maybe we are, in fact, getting closer to our goal, but stop anyway. We think we want to see more clearly, but do we? When we see more clearly we see the pain as well as the joy - in ourselves, in others and in the world around us. We may start to feel our fear, anger, sadness or disappointment more clearly. When we fall into these periods of emotional pain or resistance, we tend to hold our breath, stare and strain again, and any improvement we have made leaves us.

What is the answer? Vision improvement, as with anything we want to learn, takes persistence and dedication. How does a baby learn to walk? By falling down a million times, picking her/himself up a million and one times, and having fun in the process. As adults, most of us need help and regular inspiration in order to learn a new skill, whether it is seeing clearly, and tai chi, learning to play an instrument, or learning tango!

You might find the help you need by attending vision lessons. If you have taken Level One already, please feel free to repeat it. There is a lot of information to assimilate when first learning a new art, and this is no exception. Many people take the classes several times and get more out of the

experience each time. Also, the classes are never the same twice, because I am in a different stage in my life each time I teach. If you are confident that you 'got it' in your Level One, have been practicing, and need to deepen your practice, or, if you haven't been practicing and need motivation, the Level Two workshops will take you to the next step.

You might find it difficult to keep up the momentum on your own, but don't want to take private lessons or more classes. How about getting a group of people together to practice with you? If you want to start a support group, I would be happy to announce it in this newsletter. Reading books on the subject is often inspiring and motivating as well.

If you find that you know what to do and don't do it, then criticize yourself mercilessly for your resistance and lack of motivation, you might have some underlying limiting beliefs about yourself and your vision. If you are in therapy, you can explore these issues with your therapist. If not, you might want to come and work with me in a private lesson. Or, you might want to look into the work of Byron Katie. She wrote a book I have found very helpful in my work with myself and my students. It is called *Loving What Is*. The ideas are by no means new, but are presented in a very accessible format. Katie says that the root cause of suffering is identification with our stressful and negative thoughts - the 'stories' about our lives that are continually running through our minds. If we examine those thoughts, using the four very simple questions she came up with, we can free ourselves from much stress, and from unconscious beliefs that limit our development.

Katie's website, www.thework.org, is a very generous site that fully explains the process of inquiry that she discovered. Once a month the **Toronto Inquiry Circle** meets at Bloor Street United Church to do The Work. The next meeting is at 7:45pm on Monday 13 September. You can call me for more information 416-599-9202.

ARGENTINE TANGO LESSONS

Those who have known me for some time, know that I have a passion for Argentine Tango. Many of you have asked where you can take lessons. My teacher, Leeliana, is starting a new series of beginner classes in mid-September. I highly recommend her! She works with all the aspects that we discuss in our classes: the necessity of being grounded, centred, relaxed and aware as we learn new skills. Tango lessons taught in this way directly connect to our explorations in clearer vision, communication with others, and our inherent creativity. Interested? Contact Leeliana at dlaliliany@yahoo.ca.