



## OPTIONS CENTER



I presented a lecture to a group of computer analysts and taught the group these exercises that were listed in the above report. Find the order you like to do them in. And/or pick your favorites and use them frequently.

Helen

### IMPROVING COMPUTER PERFORMANCE THROUGH BRAIN EXERCISES

This information includes exercises that have been known to reduce stress [particularly stress from working on a computer] and integrate the three dimensions of the brain.

These exercises were part of a study, Effects of Edu-K on Computer-Related Eye and Muscle Strain of Adults [1990].

**Summary:** This pilot study was completed by Joan Spalding, M.S., Mancato State University, in partial fulfillment of the requirements toward her Master's Degree. The project was conducted over a six-week period. The purpose of the study was to determine whether Brain Gym® and Vision Gym™ activities have an effect on eye and/or muscle strain or other physical symptoms, as generated by use of computer video display terminals. Ten subjects from 29 to 50 years who use the video display terminal (VDT's) as a principal part of their work (four or more hours daily) punctuated each hour of computer time with a five minute break of Brain Gym® movements. Results indicated that computer breaks for Brain Gym® activities contributed to a lessening of visual and muscle-related stress, but had no measurable effect on other physical symptoms.

This Research report is in the *Brain Gym® Magazine*, Volume V, Number 2, Educational Kinesiology Periodical, Fall, 1991.

**CIRCUITS** - Stand close to a wall or doorway, facing straight ahead. Fix eyes at random corners without moving head. (Inhale 4 to 8 fixations; exhale 4 to 8 fixations; repeat 1-3 complete breaths.) Variation: Circle the corners.

(Adapted from a Frazier Mountain Seminars movement. Helps with peripheral awareness; breaks the staring habit.)

**BRACELETS** - Grasp above the left wrist with thumb and middle finger of right hand. Rotate hand inwards. Continue, massaging up the arm. Repeat with right wrist.

**NECK ROLLS** - Roll the head in the forward "U" position separately from rolling it in the back. Repeat 3 times. Roll slowly and deliberately, remembering to breathe. Be aware of tight spots or tension and hold the head in that position until it releases. Release shoulders by rolling

the neck with shoulders up, then roll with shoulders down. Neck rolls relax the neck and shoulders.

**NECKLACE** - Cross hands at chest. Massage Brain Buttons (indentation at sternum and clavicle). Continue to massage all along clavicle, then squeeze shoulders with hands and press back against hands. Rest hands on opposite shoulders, breathing deeply. Helps release shoulder and chest stress.)

**MAGNET** - Close eyes. "Reach out" with your eyes and "grasp" an energy or tension you feel, holding it by gently squeezing the eye muscles. Squeeze fists at the same time. Now let go of the energy, "dropping" it completely, with both the eyes and the hands. Repeat in all directions, as eyes relax. Refine movement by "placing" energy exactly and carefully. Explore visually grasping and releasing with other parts of the body (toes, shoulders, tense or painful spots). Inhale as you grasp, breathe internally as you explore what you have taken in, exhale as you release.

**STROBOSCOPIC 8's** - Blink quickly and steadily as you trace a Lazy 8 with one hand, then the other, then both hands together. Allow the hands to drift and float, enjoying the "old time movie" effect. (Blinking lubricates and relaxes the eyes. Blinking discourages staring and encourages the ability to release the image.)

**DOUBLE DOODLES** - Double doodles are a bilateral drawing activity which is done in the midfield to establish direction and orientation in space relative to the body. Draw with both hands at the same time, "in", "out", "up", and "down".

**OWL** - Grasp the shoulder and squeeze the muscles firmly while head looks straight ahead. Breathe in. Turn your head to look back over your shoulder. Breathe out deeply, pull your shoulders back, and make a "tone" while you turn your head to the opposite shoulder. Now look over the other shoulder, opening the shoulders again. Bring your head back to center.

The owl movement releases those little tensions that develop from sitting and reading. It releases neck and shoulder tension that develops under stress. It lengthens neck and shoulder muscles, restoring range of motion and circulation of blood to the brain for improved focus, attention, and memory skills.

**ARM ACTIVATION** - Hold one arm next to your ear. Exhale gently through pursed lips while activating the muscles by pushing the arm against the other hand in four directions (front, back, in, and away). The Arm Activation is an isometric activity which lengthens the muscles of the upper chest and shoulders.

**SOFT EDGES** - Shake hands in front of face enjoying the interesting shapes they create. (Helps general circulation and improve eye-hand coordination.)

**DIGGING FOR GOLD** - Rest hands in front of face, palms about 3-4 inches from face. Blink and look at hands. Now allow eyes to rotate around perimeter of hands 2-3 times. Repeat, opposite way. Rest eyes for a moment, looking and blinking from one palm to another. Now "dig for gold" in the periphery of your visual field, taking in as much as you can from your visual experience around the hands. (Special thanks to Marty and Becky Cohen for this activity. Aids in visual relaxation, eye mobility, peripheral vision.)

HELIOTROPIC BREATHING - Inhale as you close eyes; exhale as eyes open. Continue, inhaling darkness, exhaling light. Variation: Inhale, eyes open; Exhale, eyes closed. (Helps with internalization and memory storage; image release; eye relaxation and lubrication.)

WAKE-UP POINTS - Use finger tips or knuckles of thumbs to gently vibrate points on the inner then the outer "8" around the eyes. Inner circles follow line of eyebrow to temples and one inch beneath eyes. Outer circle crosses middle of forehead to temples, under cheekbone to bridge of nose. Finish by pinching the bridge of the nose. (Stimulates the acu-points around the eyes; increases circulation and relaxes vision.)

INFINITY 8's - Close eyes. With your finger, sketch a figure 8 around the eyes (touching over eyebrows and cheekbones). Follow the finger through closed eyes. Continue drawing 8's in different fields further and further from your face, focusing on hand through closed eyes. (Relaxes visual system; Increases eye mobility, eye-hand coordination, binocularity and depth awareness.)

ANCHOR AND INTEGRATION METAPHOR - Stand with feet flat on the floor. Open your arms with outstretched hands. Close your eyes. Visualize yourself in one hand and how you feel in the other hand. Notice the peace and relaxation you feel. In your mind, bring you and the positive image together as you slowly bring your hands together with fingertips meeting. Wait for pulsing in you fingertips before releasing and opening your eyes.

KNEE HUGS - Lying on back, draw one knee up to chest and hug with both arms. Other leg remains straight. Allow the hips and hamstrings to lengthen gradually, without any force. Hold 20 - 30 seconds. Repeat with other knee. Can be done lying back or modified in a sitting position. Variations are with knee to outside or medial side of body.

(This movement allows for lengthening of the gluteus and hamstring muscles. It helps with greater stability of the pelvis and low back, thereby improving grounding, centering, and general postural awareness. The stable and fluid rotation of the pelvis is functionally similar to the movement of the occiput. Integration of these two areas is necessary for efficient use of the visual system.)

Note: [Neck Rolls, Double Doodles, Owl, and Arm Activation exercises were developed by Dr. Paul Dennison and Gail Dennison of the Educational Kinesiology Foundation, who teach vision and movement exercises to educational and health professionals worldwide. Brain Gym® Magazine Volume V, No. 2, Fall 1991, Educational Kinesiology Foundation, Ventura, CA.]

### **BIBLIOGRAPHY:**

Carroll, Gabrell, *EduK Visioncircles® Exploratory Guide*

Dennison, Paul and Dennison, Gail. *Brain Gym® Teachers' Edition*. Ventura, CA: Edu-Kinesthetics, Inc. 1989.

Educational Kinesology Periodical, *Brain Gym® Magazine*, Volume V, Number 2, Fall, 1991

**Options Center for Health and Education, Inc.**  
4316 N. Prospect Road • Peoria Heights, IL 61616  
(309) 685-7721 • email: [options@mtco.com](mailto:options@mtco.com) •  
[www.options-center.com](http://www.options-center.com)