



## Brain Gym®: An Eye Opener!

**Using Brain Gym** often significantly improves the way we receive and process visual information. Issues such as eye-teaming (cooperative use of both eyes), tracking, and focus improve naturally when we do Brain Gym movements and balances, resulting in easier reading and processing of all kinds. And sometimes remarkable shifts in eye function occur.

Recently I worked with Celana, a fifth grader at a school where I was doing a Brain Gym residency day. Celana was a very sweet girl, and said she loved school -- she just wished it was easier. I learned that Celana had significant issues with eye teaming: in fact, her right eye would consistently "drift" off to the right, while the left stayed focused on a specific point or object. Not surprisingly, Celana had great difficulty with reading, and she chose to balance for the goal "I read easily." She chose a very simple Dr. Seuss book for her sample reading precheck as we began, yet she read haltingly and with little inflection.

**I did some eye checks** with Celana, and asked her to look in different directions. The same thing happened each time: her eyes never moved quite in unison, and once settled on a given point, the right eye would drift off to the right. It was as if her eyes were willing to move together, but there was nothing to anchor the vision of the right eye in its new position. Was she even focusing with that eye, and bringing in information through it?

The processes called for in Celana's Brain Gym balance session included Vision Re-Education, a technique from the Edu-K In-Depth course. This process can be accomplished in just a few minutes, yet it has powerful results. It includes determining whether one needs to work on central or peripheral focus, which "vision trigger" points on the body should be held while doing the processing, and then leading the eyes in a variety of movement patterns, following an object of a specific color.

At the end of the session I re-checked Celana's eyes, and the right eye was still tending to drift. However, when she read again from the Dr. Seuss book, she read quite fluidly, and with inflection. She said, "Now I see where the rhymes are!"

I left that day wishing I'd seen a greater shift in Celana's eye-focus, but I reminded myself to be satisfied with her significant shift in reading.

**One month later** I was at Celana's school again, and she was first on my list. She ran in quite excitedly and burst out, "It happened the next day -- I felt my right eye come on! I didn't know before that it wasn't working, but I can tell now that it is. And everything's easier now!" We celebrated together, and then I repeated her vision checks from the last session. Both her eyes were now remaining focused correctly no matter where she was looking. She

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### Sometimes remarkable shifts in eye function occur

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was delighted! We worked together for about 45 minutes on her next goal, to improve in math, and in that time her right eye did not drift once.

**Another remarkable session** recently had to do with dyslexia. On a trip to New England I had the opportunity to work with Corey. Age 30 and now working in construction, Corey had barely made it through high school due to his extreme challenge with reading and writing, although he was very intelligent. Corey was very interested in improving his reading, and was happy to have the opportunity to do a Brain Gym balance for this.

I suspected that Corey might be "leading" with his left eye, as this is very common with people who have learning challenges, and dyslexia in particular. Leading eye (also called "dominant eye") is a very important aspect of reading, and perception in general. We all have a leading eye and a blending eye. Our leading eye is the one that's programmed to do the major share of the work, and the blending eye is programmed to add supportive input from its own perspective.

**The specific challenge** about leading with the left eye is that the left eye prefers to track from right to left, directly

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opposite to the flow of our written language. This means that the left eye's tendency is to "swim upstream" against the flow of print. *With* full blending support from the right eye (which naturally tracks left to right, like our written language) this is less of an issue. *Without* full blending support of the right eye, reading can take a tremendous amount of effort as the leading left eye jerks backwards again and again, sometimes even skipping from line to line of print. It's all but impossible to comprehend material read in this way.

**Using both eyes as a team** takes simultaneous participation of both brain hemispheres. (Each eye is powered by the opposite hemisphere.) As an infant, Corey had skipped the crawling stage, the time when the brain develops major cross-hemisphere patterns required for this. My guess is that Corey's brain never developed the internal wiring to fully bring in information from the right eye and blend it with that of the left eye in any way that would allow for easy left-to-right flow.

There are various means of determining which is the lead or blending eye. A simple one is this: Hold up at arm's length a large card with a quarter-sized hole in the center. With both eyes open, look through the hole and spot a specific object across the room. Close one eye; open it and

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## His friends couldn't believe the difference in his reading

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close the other. One eye or the other will "hold" the object in view, and this is probably your leading eye. The other eye isn't really looking directly at the object, but supplying supportive information to the brain.

With Corey, however, I used muscle checking to determine eye lead. Corey actually had little vision in his left eye due to an accident eight years previously. Muscle checking is part of Applied Kinesiology, and is used by practitioners in many disciplines. When I checked Corey's eyes to determine leading eye in this way, it was clear that his (damaged) left eye was programmed to be the lead eye and his right was the blending eye.

Corey did some sample oral reading from a book with fairly simple, straightforward language. He stumbled over very simple words, and he read haltingly, word by word, with little flow or inflection. He barely made it through the first sentence and was happy to stop.

Corey's session called for a number of Edu-K processes, most significantly Three Dimension Repatterning, which creates strong connections within the brain in all three cranial dimensions: side to side, top to bottom, and front to back. This took about fifteen minutes. Corey had quite a challenge with some aspects of this process, which indicated how out-of-integration his brain was. The steps of Three Dimension Repatterning may look simple (they include coordinated movement of either the same-side or opposite arm and leg in certain ways with eyes in a certain direction, etc.) but can be extremely taxing to the neural system that's learning new patterns, so one is often quite tired afterward.

**When we finished this process** Corey read orally again, and he began with the same sentence. There was still a word he didn't recognize, but he read much more smoothly and with voice inflection. Then he continued and read the rest of the paragraph, with few hesitations and little help! Two of his friends were there, and they couldn't believe the difference both in his reading, and the relaxed state of his body while he read.

After this I checked Corey's eye lead, again using muscle checking. This check showed that he was now leading with his right eye and blending with his left eye, exactly opposite to before his session. This would indicate that, during the balance process, his brain had reorganized itself to lead with the right eye, his undamaged eye. If this is so, it would mean that Corey's right eye was available to bring in information more fully. And this eye has the optimal left-to-right tracking, which supports reading.

**Shifts of this kind** never cease to amaze me because they speak to the body's innate intelligence at work, and its resilience. Scientists today often refer to how "plastic" the human brain is, and how it can reorganize after damage or surgery, with the remaining portions taking on the tasks of the damaged ones. Without brain scans and detailed testing it's impossible to know for sure what may have happened within Corey's brain. In Brain Gym we rely on feedback from the client regarding changes in body awareness and function, and the shifts in behavior and attitude we observe following any balance we do.

My travel plans required that I leave the next day, so I was not able to do any follow-up work with Corey. I left him with instructions for doing PACE, the Brain Gym warm-up, and resources for finding a Brain Gym consultant in his area. This was an excellent start; and to make ongoing change, Corey will want to address his challenge over time.



# HANDS ON!

Using Brain Gym® in the Classroom – and Beyond!  
to make learning and teaching  
more effective and fun!

A course for Educators and Parents  
with

**Isabel Cohen, Remedial Reading Teacher**

**Marcelle Goldsmith, Occupational Therapist**

both from South Africa, and authors of

***HANDS ON - How to use Brain Gym® in the Classroom***

## Brain Gym is:

physical **movements, strategies, and activities** that increase learning through their effects on the brain. Brain Gym has been documented to **improve basic skills and standardized test scores**. Principals have seen the tremendous effect of Brain Gym in the schools. Brain Gym has been used throughout the world to **increase learning and improve student behavior**. It's simple to learn, and easy to use!

## OUTCOMES of using *HANDS ON* techniques in South Africa include:

- Improved reading fluency
- Improved reading comprehension
- Increased time on task
- Improved writing fluency and neatness
- Improved focus and listening skills
- Increase in positive behavior
- Greater writing creativity

## You will:

- Learn simple tools to **effortlessly boost reading and writing**
- Acquire a full “**tool kit**” of dynamic movements that you can use *tomorrow* in your classroom
- Explore the use of movement to **reconnect with the joy of learning**
- Learn how to adapt Brain Gym movements for use with **special needs** learners
- Explore **strategies** for the classroom
- Enjoy Marcelle and Isabel's boundless **enthusiasm and inspiration!**
- Find out what you've been missing!

**Date:** January 23-24, 2003 (Thursday-Friday)

**Time:** 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

**Location:** Central Phoenix - to be announced

**Cost:** \$200 if paid in full by January 7 -- \$225 thereafter

\$175 per person for three or more registrants from the same school or district, paid in full by Jan. 7

Includes the *HANDS ON* book, a \$30 value

**Registration form:** On reverse of this flyer, or [www.centeredge.com](http://www.centeredge.com)

**Contact:** Kathy Brown, M.Ed., 602-952-7001 or [kb@centeredge.com](mailto:kb@centeredge.com)

**Brain Gym: Everyone's talking about it. Are you using it?**

# Registration for HANDS ON with Isabel Cohen & Marcelle Goldsmith

Name (please print clearly) \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Work Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Fax \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

How did you find out about this course? \_\_\_\_\_

**HANDS ON -- \$200** if paid in full by January 7, 2003

**HANDS ON -- \$225** after January 7, 2003

**HANDS ON -- School Discount**

\$175 for three or more registrants from the same school, paid in full by January 7, 2003. Please duplicate this form and send all registrations together. Include either one check for the total amount of a separate check for each participant if paying individually.

School or school district \_\_\_\_\_

All payments must be received by the first day of class. (Sorry, no post-paid purchase orders.)

**DATE:** January 23-24, 2003 (Thursday-Friday)

**LOCATION:** Central Phoenix, to be announced

Mail this form with your course fee to

**Kathy Brown / Center Edge • 4815 E. Pinchot Ave. • Phoenix, AZ 86018**

Checks Payable to Center Edge

For more information please see our website at [www.centeredge.com](http://www.centeredge.com)

**Contact: Kathy Brown, M.Ed. • 602-952-7001 • [kb@centeredge.com](mailto:kb@centeredge.com)**

## The Brain Gym® Course Schedule

**February 7 - 8 - 9, 2003 (Friday - Sunday)**

**March 7 - 8 - 9, 2003 (Friday - Sunday)**

Additional dates will be announced soon

**Registration:** \$375 (\$325 if paid by two weeks before course start). Repeat for \$190/\$160.

**Time:** 9 am to 5 pm each day

**Location:** Center Edge office, unless otherwise announced

**Instructor:** Kathy Brown, M.Ed.

**Prerequisite:** None

Often referred to as 101-Brain Gym, this is the introductory course to Brain Gym. Brain Gym is the core element of Educational Kinesiology (Edu-K), a system developed by learning specialist Dr. Paul Dennison, in which simple developmental movements and processes are used to enhance physical, mental and emotional ease and functioning.

### **What you will learn in the Brain Gym® Course:**

- all 26 Brain Gym movements and how to use them to connect with your innate intelligence and ability
- a variety of simple yet powerful Brain gym balances for yourself and others in the areas of positive attitudes, seeing, listening, writing/communication and whole-body coordination
- Dennison Laterality Repatterning to connect the right and left hemispheres of the brain, creating communication and coordination throughout the body.

*These dates don't work? Please call. We'd be happy to arrange a Brain Gym 101 course or introductory program for your group, school or organization.*

## Form & Function – a NEW Edu-K Course!

with Rose Harrow

**May 24-25, 2003 – Saturday-Sunday – 9:30 am to 5:30 pm both days**

**Registration:** \$245 (\$225 with \$100 non-refundable deposit by May 10)

(Repeat for \$125/\$115)

**Prerequisite:** Brain Gym® 101

**Location:** To be announced – Central Phoenix

**Instructor:** Rose Harrow

Special Note: This pilot course fulfills the Anatomy/Physiology requirements for the Core Curriculum to become a Brain Gym instructor.

The Form & Function Course is a wonderful opportunity to deepen your experience and understanding of each Brain Gym movement. This will allow you to more fully integrate each movement yourself, and provide the tools for fully explaining each movement to your students and clients.

### **In Form & Function you will explore how the body is designed to function, from a Brain Gym perspective - including:**

- Bones, muscle groups, and energy flows
- Anatomy behind the 3 Dimensions of whole-brain learning
- Where each point is located
- Which muscles you are activating, and why
- Positioning the body to experience the richness of each movement

## Bal-a-Vis-X taught by Bill Hubert

**Fri, April 11, 2003** (evening) *and* **Sat, April 12, 2003** (8:30am to 3:00pm) in Sahuarita, AZ (just south of Tucson)

**Bal-A-Vis-X** is a series of **B**alance/**A**uditory/**V**ision **eX**ercises of varied complexity, which require full-body coordination and focused attention. Most of these exercises are deeply rooted in rhythm. While not an Edu-K course, Bal-a-Vis-X supports whole brain integration and complements the Brain Gym program.

**Contact course sponsor:** Liz Johnson - 505-538-5970 or ljohnson@cybermesa.com

## **Dr. Paul Dennison - teaching in Phoenix!**

### **Total Core Repatterning -- Fri-Sun, Nov. 7-8-9, 2003**

Focuses on the recognition of primitive homolateral reflexes that become integrated by repatterning. Training in the latest techniques for integrating primitive reflexes which interfere with learning and mature motor control. These tools are useful for helping all individuals, regardless of neurological or physiological limitations. Open to students who have taken Edu-K In Depth. \$450

### **Master At Work -- Thursday, Nov. 6, 2003**

An opportunity to spend time with the Master of the Craft of Edu-K. This is a one-day version of the Master In Depth course. Dr. Dennison shares his expertise by demonstrating the Edu-K material first hand. \$150.

*Registration details will be on Center Edge website soon.*

### ***Also coming up:***

**Brain Organization Profiles** with Kathy Brown – June 14 -15, 2003

**Edu-K In-Depth** with Colleen Gardner – Fall, 2003

### **Kathy Brown, M.Ed.**

*Licensed Brain Gym® Consultant and Instructor*

kb@centeredge.com  
www.centeredge.com

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602-952-7001  
602-952-1174 FAX



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and personal effectiveness*

4915 E. Pinchot Avenue | Phoenix, AZ 85018