

OVER FOCUS- The Posture of Our Times

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Bill smells smoke in the room. A doctoral candidate in his last semester of classes, he methodically finishes the page he is reading before acting upon his instincts to investigate the fire.

Janet, age 13, has always had perfect vision. An enthusiastic swimmer and dancer, she now wears lenses for near-sightedness and spends all of her time indoors studying and watching television.

Victoria, age 26, has pain in her back and neck. She has had a sudden weight gain since becoming a computer transcriber. She is unable to focus her eyes nor make eye contact, and her neck seems to be disappearing into her shoulders..

What do these people have in common? They all share the "overfocused" posture which is a major challenge to our culture today. Experts estimate that 8 out of 10 people will need prescriptive lenses in their lifetime due to stress related visual complications. Both the visually gestalt-oriented person and the visually-analytic-oriented person are vulnerable to the stresses of a society that disproportionately rewards focusing on near-point tasks. The physical, emotional, and spiritual needs of these people, if uncorrected, are a staggering responsibility.

These people can learn to experience a new visual awareness of the world. We believe they can change, because we believe they have learned their present vision. If they can learn to function from one visual system, they can learn another one just as easily! Their vision reflects their individual, unique perception of life, and their choices based upon visually-related "successes" and "failures"!

Our society, our educational system, our family influences, and our genetic predispositions all play a role, working together, to shape who we are at any given moment in time. We are a sum total of all our experiences and how we have interpreted those experiences as guidelines for the future.

In previous writings we have often spoken of the "underfocused" posture shared by the learning handicapped. We have taught how to recognize "switched off" postures which reflect an inability to concentrate, comprehend, articulate and participate. "Underfocused" people may appear "spaced out", lazy, and uncaring. Our E-K techniques get them participating, motivated, and accessing hidden reservoirs of knowledge.

Today we are discussing the "overfocused" person rather than the "underfocused". Our research and successes with the "underfocused" posture have enabled us to develop an understanding of the "overfocused" which has, in turn, led to a breakthrough in natural vision and posture improvement.

OVERFOCUSED - POSTURE AND PERSONALITY

The "overfocused" person has usually compensated "successfully" for stresses she or he encountered in their early learning experiences. The "overfocused" person may be a "workaholic"; the person who knows how to succeed, but, when he gets to the top, may be unable to tell you why he is there or have the energy to enjoy it.

The "overfocused" person is often highly sensitive to criticism and praise. For him, pleasing others and avoiding failure often become the motivating factors of existence. Through careful concentration and analysis the individual gains success at home and school where intuition and movement where probably not rewarded. As he develops the ability to move images closer and closer, he learns to read and write to the satisfaction of those giving school grades and approval.

The "overfocused" person discovers she is good with details, puzzles, words, and verbal directions. She grows up controlling the universe of language, people and computers, instead of "blending" in harmony with them. To her "winning isn't everything, it's the only thing!" The only social situations which are comfortable involve competition, rules, and rewards.

The "overfocused" person avoids seeing a bigger picture and seems unable to keep things in perspective. From early childhood there is often evidence of an inability to be aware of the context of a given situation. It may begin with a "me only" attitude and later extend into an insistence that life proceed "my way". What appears as stubbornness may be an inflexibility which makes it impossible to see another point of view but one's own.

The "overfocused" personality is soon reflected in our vision and in our posture. We shut down our abilities to see the distance in order to win at seeing the near point work. We lose the ability to see the periphery in order to have the tunnel vision necessary to get by our obstacles. We shut out the light and wear sunglasses in order to block stimulation. We stop breathing in order to stifle inspiration.

The "overfocused" person is recognized by a posture which finds the head uncomfortably forward, the shoulders rounded and hunched, and the arms unable to move through full range of motion. There is an inability to turn the head from side to side and a rigidity within the body, especially in the thighs and hips. If the person uses corrective lenses, he is usually myopic.

The Touch for Health muscles most often affected are: Latissimus Dorsi, Neck Muscles, Teres Minor, Pectoralis Major Clavicular, Anterior Serratus, Rhomboids, Levator Scapulae, Abdominals, Psoas, Hamstrings, Adductors, and Gracilis. Some or all of these are often found to be "weak", homolateral, or "overenergy strong".

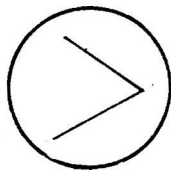
The "overfocused" posture is learned in order to hold "energy" unnaturally in the front brain where verbal mediation takes place. The early success of this posture prevents the natural integration with the more intuitive back portion of the brain.

The E-K consultant teaches people to recognize patterns of living which are present yet no longer useful or desirable to the individual. Once recognized, those patterns can be repatterned and transmuted into more whole and beneficial modes of living and challenge-solving.

To discover if your student has a "Focused" posture, there are several tests available:

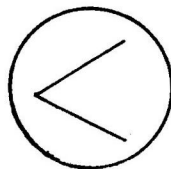
TEST FOR FOCUS:

1. Test a strong indicator muscle in the clear.
2. Say, "Focus on the sound of my voice." (Any test of concentration or comprehension can be explored here, as the underfocused person will be unable to accomplish this type of task without stress and the muscle will switch off).
3. To confirm #2 above, test nonverbally by muscle testing while looking at the following symbol. If your student is "switched off" on the symbol, this suggests that she is unable to concentrate all her energy at a single point. She is underfocused and needs to be corrected as such (see below).



If your student remains strong, she is able to "focus".

4. If your student is strong on #3 above, he may be able to focus, yet may be "overfocused". To determine if "overfocus" is present say, "Focus on...(my voice) and keep everything in perspective." If "switched off", your student is probably "overfocused".
5. To confirm #4 above nonverbally, muscle test the person while looking at the following symbol. This symbol suggests that the person is unable to concentrate and be aware of the context of the situation at the same time.



The Advanced E-K balance for under and overfocus, using priorities, is part of the curriculum in the "Advanced E-K" and "Art of Seeing" Workshops. Creative Touch for Health or E-K I and II balances can help expand movement into these focus-related areas through teaching and awareness of the related postures.

TEACHING FOCUS THROUGH MOVEMENT

BRAIN GYM activities that are especially helpful for the under or overfocused posture:

1. EARTH BUTTONS (central meridian: helps the underfocused posture to attend to a single point)
2. SPACE BUTTONS (governing meridian: helps the overfocused posture sense the "bigger context")
3. THE OWL (opens both central and peripheral awareness)
4. ARM ACTIVATION (helps with near point abilities)
5. FOOTFLEX (especially important for the underfocused posture and the development of ego and language)
6. CALF PUMP (activates both movement and stabilizing abilities)
7. GROUNDER (awareness of solid body foundation is especially helpful to the underfocused person)
8. GRAVITY GLIDER (helps develop an awareness of self in space - beneficial to both focus and context abilities)