



THE EDU-K UPDATE

MARCH 2009

Dear Students and Professional Members,

The economy continues to fluctuate. How does that make me feel? Am I waiting for another down day? No, I'm not. I am delighted to be blessed with tools to support me when I'm feeling stressed, over-focused, or just "off".

How many of us regularly access our Brain Gym® "tool belt"? Maybe it is time to find it, dust it off, see what needs polishing and use what we know to be useful. What do we tell friends and clients who are feeling challenged? How about treating ourselves as a friend or client, and using all of our facilitating skills to move out of "the yuk"?

I remember my first Brain Gym® 101 course. I was awed with the information, challenged with familiar words being used in a different way and the new terminology. How I loved the movement! I was drawn in to what I came to understand as my way of learning – kinesthetic. The permission to move was freeing and affirming.

The first morning of class we learned PACE, noticing and the Action Balance for Positive Attitudes; I went home and slept for 2 hours. My system had not experienced anything like this before and sleeping was my way of integrating. I was hooked and attended every class that came into town. While taking courses, I became involved with a balance group. There were 3 of us who met once a week to practice whatever we had learned or were in the process of learning. If one person couldn't make the meeting, there were still 2 of us to play with the material.

This work has been part of my life for 18 years now. My roles and responsibilities continue evolving, from student to BG 101 Instructor to International Faculty member. I most recently accepted the role of Board Chair. I eagerly anticipate moving this organization forward and serving you, the members, along with the Board, Faculty, and Administration.

Wherever you are in your Brain Gym® experience, grab your tool belt, a friend or two and have some fun! This is a time for moving, not getting stuck – have a grand time!

Bonnie Hershey, M.Ed.
Board Chair

Edu-K Tips and Tools:

by Deborah Scott Studebaker

Slowing Down for a Closer Look: the Post-Activity

As I think about the words in the title that I have just typed, I have a mental picture of driving by a house for sale. Even though I've passed it many times before, something about it catches my eye today and I make a U-turn to get a closer look. I approach slowly, taking in the details as well as the big picture, make a note to call about it later, and then drive off, excited by my "new" discovery. And so it is with the *Post-Activity*, Step 5 in the Edu-K balance protocol. We do something that is familiar to us, then suddenly see it from a different angle.

Let's back up for a moment first. As discussed last month, in Step 4 the learning menu is the vehicle for moving through the physical aspects of the balance process. And because the Brain Gym® movements are so playful, we may be unaware of the profound effects they are having on our mind-body system.

It is during the post-activity that we slow down for a closer look at ourselves. So I'd like to give the term "post activity" a different emphasis. It's not just the counterpart to the *pre-activity*. It also describes the state of calm that is available to us post *activity*: when we push the pause button we can relax, receive new insights, and recommit to our goal.

When we can "feel what we feel and notice what we notice" (as
International Faculty Member Pamela

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Brain Gym News & Events

2009 BRAIN GYM® INTERNATIONAL ANNUAL CONFERENCE

Germany

April 16th-19th, 2009

"Movement, Brain and Learning"

Kirchzarten, near Freiburg, Southern Germany

To register: [click here](#).

BRAIN GYM® DAYS

Washington, USA

August 8-9 in Seattle, Washington:

"Supporting Our Individual and Collective Success"

Contact: Rose Harrow

rainroser@comcast.net

Our [Brain Gym® Events](#) page is updated regularly.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Journal

The Brain Gym Journal Department informed us that this year's March and July issues will come out in June as a special double issue. The issue will focus on various reports and studies on Brain Gym's effectiveness around the world.

Our Office Team

Our administrative team has experienced federal jury service, a family emergency, a funeral, and illness in the past month. Between these mini-adventures, and two of us leaving for the Annual Conference in Germany, there will only be one or two team members in the office on any given day for at least a month. We appreciate your patience and look forward to a return to status quo.

International Faculty Member Pamela Curlee says) we regain our bearings. Slowing down for the post-activity encourages new perspectives; making the U-turn allows us to reflect on where we've been and choose where we want to go.

Our balance series will conclude next month with *Celebration* – a very important addendum to the 5 Steps. If you have a story to share about the ways you celebrate the completion of a balance, this is your chance! Email us at info@braingym.org. Mention "Tips and Tools" in the subject line. We always welcome your thoughts!

Get Your Hands On!

by Isabel Cohen

I have taught the "Hands On – How to Use Brain Gym® in the Classroom" workshop many times over the years; all of these have contributed to and enriched my teaching experience. Last year in Los Angeles, I was privileged to be part of a teaching scenario, which embodied for me the intention, spirit, application, and celebration of a Brain Gym® Workshop in totality. It was a great class from beginning to end and so far beyond. I was fortunate enough to be able to share, not only the class in action, but what happened thereafter. This is what I want to share with you.

The class was sponsored by Brain Gym® Instructor and Educational Therapist, Dr Kari Miller, who recognized the benefit to teachers and therapists of getting credits towards a salary point increase for attending the class and completing post workshop assignments. She facilitated this by completing the paperwork for the LAUSD and together we devised an assignment protocol. The teachers put the course curriculum into practice for a period of time and then wrote up their noticing and reflection for review. What added another dynamic dimension to this was the requirement that they share their reflections and noticing with the other members of the group via email.

Spotlight On: Brain Gym for Special Needs Providers (170 SN)

By Cecilia Koester, M.Ed, author

Since 1998, Brain Gym for Special Needs Providers has been taught in the US, Canada, Singapore and Malaysia. It is an experiential class that provides an in-depth study of how to use the Brain Gym work with children and adults who have special needs. Participants learn how to assess the needs of an individual, develop a Brain Gym program to meet those needs, evaluate the effectiveness of the program and how to modify the program when necessary for maximum results. Also included in the course is a rare opportunity to observe Cecilia working with a child/adult. This provides a forum for participants to see how/where to begin with a child in the assessment process and how to naturally fold the Brain Gym principles into his/her every day life. Visit our [Level One](#) course listings for a recent schedule of Brain Gym for Special Needs Providers.

Executive Director, Kari Coady shares, *"My first Brain Gym class was Brain Gym for Special Needs Providers. At the time, I was a frustrated first grade teacher in search of anything that would help my students. BG101 wasn't offered anytime soon, so I decided to attend Cece's class even though I didn't work with Special Needs. There were three demonstrations during the class: a stroke patient, a 10 year-old with Angelman Syndrome, and a five year-old who couldn't walk. The shifts and changes I witnessed in those four days were amazing, and all I could think was 'if it can work for them, and it works for me, it's gotta work for my students too! And it did!"*

Ask Dave

Dave administers and answers questions posted to our [website](#) message board, "Ask Dave". To visit or post a question [click here](#).

Question:

Could you tell me how long each of the four actions in the pace procedure should be performed, and also how many times a day is optimal?

Dave's Answer:

In the research done with the first year nursing students in Oregon they did PACE for 6 minutes. I assume there was little or no time allotted for sipping water and 2 minutes for Brain Buttons, 2 minutes for Cross Crawl, and 1 minute for each part of Hook-ups. The usual time suggestion, once you have learned how to do a Brain Gym exercise, (aside from sipping water) is to do each exercise for about a minute except for Hook-ups which is usually recommended to do each part for a minute. The best recommendation is to do each exercise until you feel complete with it.

The best recommendation for how many times a day is to do PACE when you feel you need to (when you feel stressed), or just do it once a day and do whatever part of it you feel you

The noticing was profound! Teachers and therapists were applying what they had learned in the workshop (not unusual). They shared their noticing and reflections of class activities and readings (successful and sometimes not). Their fellow teachers responded with encouraging suggestions, praise, and gratitude for the sharing and new learning of math, reading, learning readiness, and special needs teaching. This was such an honouring cycle between sponsor, workshop presenter, teachers, therapists and students-- all co-creating and learning from each other!

Some comments from the participants:

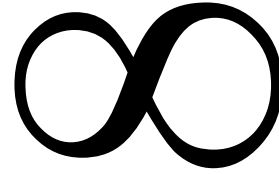
- "It has been inspiring to read what others have been doing in their classrooms" S. Teacher
- "I loved the Bingo song C wrote...and am practising it with my class" M. Teacher
- "Very impressed with L's use of the Lazy 8's and will introduce these next week" S. Teacher

May this workshop model prove to be the inspiration for you that it has been to me.

Isabel Cohen is the co-author of the manual and course: Hands On How to use Brain Gym (R) in the Classroom. She has been working as a Remedial Teacher and Brain Gym® Instructor in Cape Town, South Africa since the early 1990's. She has traveled to the USA many times to share the Hands On course and her experiences as a teacher who uses the Brain Gym® program integrally with her students who range from "KG to past cool". She is deeply grateful for the reciprocal learning that happens in each class.

Editor's Note: The Hands On course is co-authored by Isabel Cohen and Marcelle Goldsmith-Shaman.

just do it once a day and do whatever part of it you feel you need when you feel the need. I drink water more often than I do the rest of PACE during the day, not just because I am thirsty, but because I know it will enhance my performance if I drink it when I feel the need to. Sometimes Brain Buttons, or Cross Crawl, or Hook-ups, or one of the other Brain Gym(R) exercises feels like what I need to accomplish what I am doing.



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