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THE HEART OF LISTENING

HOW DO YOU
KNOW WHAT
HE WANTS?

KINESIOLOGY
FOR THE
GERIATRIC
POPULATION



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Eliza Bergeson and Bonnie Hershey each manage successful businesses that utilize the Brain Gym program, and offer countless tips on professionalism in their *Business in Balance* course.

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Sharon Todd, Kirk's mom, celebrates the simplicity of Lazy 8s in building community and interdependence within the classroom.

credits

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Notes from the Editor

Deborah Scott Studebaker



There's something about the Brain Gym® work that fires up the imagination and makes people want to be of service! When I began my Brain Gym journey in 2004, my desire was to become licensed as soon as I could -- I was ready to take on the problems of the world! And when my first teacher said that the real journey begins *after* licensure, I smiled and nodded, certain that I understood. It was soon afterward that I knew my education was, indeed, only beginning.

Being a Brain Gym consultant is about so much more than knowledge and technique. Because we don't *fix* others, we create an environment where they can become open to the possibilities of change. And we're evolving too! Fortunately, we're part of a community willing to help out as we grow, whether it relates to the nuances of a client relationship, the practical aspects of setting up a business, or the importance of self-care.

I am so proud that this issue offers up a variety of "how-to's" to help you increase your own understanding: how to adapt movements for various settings, how to find new ways to assist the people in our lives, how to listen, how to notice more deeply... even how to say no!

We look forward to hearing about *your* breakthroughs, case studies, and best practices too. There's a whole world out there of students, instructors and newcomers to Educational Kinesiology who will appreciate your point of view.

And do tell us more about what else you'd like to see in this magazine. Just as you are committed to supporting your friends, family, children, students and clients in drawing out their best, the BG GO team is committed to supporting you!

Submissions

We invite anyone who has experienced the Brain Gym® work, licensed or not, to submit articles for possible publication in the *Brain Gym® GO*. "Articles" will share observations about how using the Brain Gym work or "moving with intention" is empowering others to reclaim the joy of living. They may be a variety of lengths, and include but are not limited to:

- Testimonials
- Quotes
- Stories
- Studies (research, anecdotal, etc)

Send submissions for review to info@braingym.org. Signed permission is needed for any photos and school acknowledgement, and all submissions are subject to editing.

Letters to the Editor

Did you reflect on an article? Is there a thought you'd like to share? Email us at info@braingym.org; include "BG GO Letter to the Editor" in the subject header. Please include your full name, mailing address, daytime phone number, and e-mail address so that we may contact you with any questions. Letters may be edited.

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For information about the courses on which this material is based, visit Brain Gym® International at www.braingym.org or info@braingym.org. Copyright © 2010 Educational Kinesiology Foundation/Brain Gym® International. All right reserved. Portions of this publication may be reproduced for educational purposes only. Opinions expressed herein are those of the writers, and do not necessarily reflect the official policy of Brain Gym® International.

The Heart of Listening: Building Rapport in a Wealth-Healthy Brain Gym Business

Eliza Bergeson
and Bonnie Hershey



As a service oriented entrepreneur, you are your business. When you speak, your business speaks. Ironically, the best way to “speak” about your business and attract new clients is by listening. When you listen deeply with interest and an open heart, you demonstrate professional competency in ways that describing your offerings, approach, and expertise can seldom match. Through listening, you are letting prospective clients know that it is not about you, it’s about them.

The journey with a new client often begins by phone as you discern in your first conversation whether or not your services are a good match for them or their child. They may immediately ask what you do and what your fees are. But they really want to know who you are. Do they feel safe with you? Are you experienced? Do you care? They need to establish rapport with the heart-centered practitioner in you.

You can address this substratum of inquiry with questions that draw forth their concerns. “Yes, I would be glad to tell you about my work and my fees, but first can you tell me...?” When enrolling new clients, there are three kinds of questions you can ask to achieve this aim: Open-ended, Closed-ended and Magic.

1. Open-ended Questions (*from the head and heart*)—These questions help to stimulate creative, thoughtful dialog. They are investigative. They most often begin with “What”, “Why” or “How.” For example:

“So tell me, what challenges is your son facing?”

“What kinds of approaches have you tried thus far and which ones have worked?”

“What does he love to do? What does he avoid?” or

“What would you like to be doing that you aren’t doing now?”

“If you weren’t feeling _____, how would you like to feel instead?”

“Why do you think that approach didn’t work for you?”

Ironically, the best way to “speak” about your business and attract new clients is by listening.

2. Closed-ended Questions (*from the head*)—Use Closed-ended Questions when looking for a definitive answer or commitment of “Yes”, “No” or “Maybe.” These questions begin with “Do”, “Does”, “Are”, “Can”, “Will” and “Would”. You can also use Closed-ended Questions for clarification. These begin with “How.” “How old...how much... how many?” For example:

“Does she have the time in her schedule for weekly sessions?”

“How old is your daughter?” or

“How many siblings do you have?”

“Would you be interested in starting next week?”

3. Magic Questions (*from the heart*)—These questions encourage us to think out of the box, beyond our usual limitations and begin with “If.” For example:

“If you could envision a next big step for your son, what would you like to see?”

“If your son could accomplish anything he wanted to, what would it be?” or

“If money weren’t an issue, what would you like to be doing now?”

“If you could wave a magic wand, what would you like your life to look like?”

These questions are the most powerful tools you can use to awaken inner awareness, putting potential clients in charge of their own learning right from the start. After establishing rapport, you can briefly answer any questions they may have about your work and fees. You may often find that, if you have asked the right questions, they need no further information.

When stating your fees, be sure to also mention your office policies concerning cancellations and any other details you feel they need to know. At this point, if you feel there is a match, put the ball in their hands by asking, “So how would you like to move forward?” This “un-sales-y”, open-ended question provides an irresistible invitation. Who wouldn’t like to move forward?

Take meticulous notes of potential clients’ data and of your conversations. Review these notes before the first in-person meeting. Your thoroughness lets them know from the get-go that you listen well and care enough to keep track of what they have said.

Your success, beyond all skill with techniques and modalities, lies in your ability to communicate from the heart. Though the language of the heart is silent, it is a powerful force in working with clients—making possible all true healing, growth, and transformation.

The greatest gift you can give another is the purity of your attention.
Richard Moss

You cannot truly listen to anyone and do anything else at the same time.
M. Scott Peck

The greatest compliment that was ever paid me was when one asked me what I thought, and attended to my answer.
Henry David Thoreau

It is the province of knowledge to speak
And it is the privilege of wisdom to listen.
Oliver Wendell Holmes

Nature gave us one tongue and two ears so we could hear twice as much as we speak.
Epictetus

Eliza Bergeson, M. Ed. and Bonnie Hershey, M.Ed. co-founded the Kinesiology Connection in Lexington, Massachusetts in 1995. Business in Balance and The Heart of Listening pull together the best of experience and expertise from this successful, on-going collaboration. Eliza’s current company, Brilliance Unlimited, offers professional and performance coaching for entrepreneurs. She is the author of The Yes! In Success: Expansion of the Human Spirit. Bonnie is Board chair for Brain Gym® International and an International Faculty Member. As director of the Kinesiology Connection, Bonnie provides energetic and inspiring leadership and mentoring for New England’s growing Brain Gym community.

Board's Bulletin

Moira Dempsey

In 2004, I was invited to join the Brain Gym® International Board of Directors. I was very honoured to be the first person, other than faculty members, from outside the USA to become a Board member. At the time I was living in Singapore; however, after being away for seventeen years I returned to live in my hometown of Melbourne, Australia. My main focus on the Board has always been about expanding opportunities for our members and enhancing their Edu-K/Brain Gym experiences.

I was involved for many years with getting the recently-completed Affiliate Policy approved: this policy honours the varied systems and structures around the world that support Edu-K/Brain Gym. It enables us to create unanimity so that we can take the international organisation forward with clarity and consistency, and it allows the membership in various regions to play greater roles in developing their work.

In 2004, I was asked to look at what was happening with the BRAIN GYM trademark in various countries. Well, this was a task! However, we now have trademark coverage to over sixty countries, which in turn provides more protection to members. The "International" in "Brain Gym® International" is really living up to its word!

Currently, I chair the Resource Development Committee, which focuses on how to further develop our financial resources and viability, including our donor base. For example, the committee is investigating ways to broaden our membership to those who use Brain Gym in their work, yet are not licensed instructors. What do you think of this? We would love to hear your thoughts and any other related suggestions. Write to info@braingym.org with Resource Development in the subject header.

Brain Gym® International is always looking for people to serve on committees. If you are interested in becoming more involved, let us know, and we will gladly put you to work!

On behalf of Brain Gym® International's Board of Directors,
Moira Dempsey



My main focus on the Board has always been about expanding opportunities for our members and enhancing their Edu-K/Brain Gym experiences.

Letters to the Editor

“This is a great publication - beautiful, fresh, professional! And I love the name - gets people oriented immediately that we are international! Thanks for a beautiful job launching this.”

ROSE HARROW, *International Faculty, USA*

CONGRATULATIONS TO ALL who have anything to do with the publication of the first issue of *Brain Gym Global Observer*. Also a BIG Thank You to Gail for initiating the *Brain Gym Journal* which now gave birth to the *Global Observer*.

Once I started reading the *BG Global Observer*, I couldn't put it down until I came to the last page. Gloria's "Metaphor of the X" is extremely interesting and informative. I now am able to appreciate more the simple Brain Gym activity of THINK of an X. Kathy's "Brain Plasticity..." gives me much comfort and hope when attending to people with brain damage. Recently, one of our high school students had an accident at the playing field and is now like in a vegetative state at a hospice. "Tina's Transformation" by Janet gives me renewed reason to persevere using Brain Gym and share this exquisite tool for learning with my students and the children at the kindergarten where I work.

BRO. DOMINIC CHONG,
fsc, Singapore

I COULD SPEND HOURS reading this stuff. It's so valuable to me to see in writing what I live and teach. Nice. I LOVE the *Global Observer*! What a great title and the articles are glimpses into the hearts of all of us who do this work! Thank you again and again,

CECE KOESTER,
Licensed Instructor, USA

JUST A LITTLE NOTE to congratulate you all on the wonderful first issue of the *Global Observer*. Love the format, the look, the content. Really great! Thanks so much!

LISA MARCOVICI,
Licensed Instructor, Canada

ALL I CAN SAY IS "WOW" I love the *BG GO!* You all did an awesome job. I just dove in to reading the articles and look forward to reading each and every one.

BONNIE HERSHEY, *International Faculty and Board Chair USA*

Lazy 8s Make Transitions Great!

Sharon Todd

It is amazing how children know what they need, and then begin to support themselves when given the right tools.

My business partner, Jill Hewlett, and I are licensed Brain Gym® Instructors/Consultants who offer our clients a variety of tools that support cognitive fitness and multi-sensory success. In our experience, many children, especially those with Autism, hold a great deal of anxiety in their bodies. This is particularly evident during transitions from one activity or environment to another, sitting still for extended periods of time, waiting in line or even when coming in from recess. Such heightened levels of stress tend to obstruct any meaningful learning and connection, not only with the intended curricular materials but also with peer to peer social interactions



and the ability to self-regulate (the process of taking in sensory information, and calmly monitoring and adjusting one's behavior in response to it).

This subject is especially meaningful to me because my son, Kirk, has Autism. I remember when he completed grade one; during that school year he required frequent movement breaks to nourish his sensory integration needs.

Given the right tools, children will naturally attend to their needs, and the needs of others.

When Kirk had difficulty sitting for the twenty-minute period of carpet time, his teacher developed a very effective strategy to help him stay alert. Since she rarely had Educational Assistants available, and could not always attend to his needs while facilitating the curriculum, she began tracing Lazy 8s on his back to support his attending skills and proprioception*.

Of course, kids catch on to these things, and Kirk's classmates started noticing how his behavior would shift



once the teacher began to do these Lazy 8s. He would go from not being able to sit still or stay out of others' personal space, to sitting calmly, and honoring personal boundaries.

One day when the teacher was busy during carpet time, one of his classmates noticed that Kirk needed support and began to do Lazy 8s on his back. The result...he became regulated!! From that point on, doing Lazy 8s became an instinctual response by the students when my son needed it.

Just this one Brain Gym® movement brought inclusivity and cohesion to the group.

There would be no discussion about who was going to do it; Lazy 8s would just happen.

Months later, Kirk was invited to move to an integrated school, and we leapt at the opportunity! While the change of environments was positive, we wanted the transition to be as well. I initiated the "transition talk" with my son. I said, "Guess what? You get to go to a new school that teaches the way you learn. Not all teachers know how to do this, and we are so lucky to find a school that does. You get to keep your current friends and make a bunch of new friends too!"

Kirk sat there for a while considering this and then said, "But Mommy, who is going to rub my back?" This response brought tears to my eyes.

Evidently, my son knew how much

the Lazy 8s offered by his classmates and teacher had helped him with transitions, self-regulation and attending skills. He knew this same kind of assistance would be needed for a successful experience at the new school. If this was his primary concern, then I could not ask for a better outcome! I was not worried because I knew the new academic environment would be open to addressing his needs in this way.

My son transitioned very successfully with the help of lots of Lazy 8s, among other tools. We went back to his old school a few weeks later to visit the teacher and his friends. It turns out that once Kirk left, the kids kept doing the Lazy 8s on each other during carpet time! Just this one Brain Gym® movement brought inclusivity and cohesion to the group. I believe it also provided a coping tool for his absence, as my son was definitely missed.

Children are amazingly intuitive! Given the right tools, they will naturally attend to their needs, and the needs of others.

Jill Hewlett and Sharon Todd are both Licensed Brain Gym® Trainers/Instructors in Toronto, Ontario, Canada. Their company, Brain Works Global Inc., trains clients of all ages on how to maximize their learning potential while working in conjunction with their individual goals.
www.brainworksglobal.com

What if Brain Gym® International had several active public service programs, each one reflecting and grounded in a “giving back” spirit? Imagine if our organization was consistently participating in goodwill projects, all of which had name recognition and could easily be found on our website. How would our marketing strategies shift? Would it create more abundance? Would our mission be more fully realized? What effect would this have on people’s understanding of what we’re all about? How might the energy within our organization change if such programs were a constant undercurrent upon which all other Brain Gym® International activities were floating buoyantly?

At our annual conference I spoke about the idea of aligning more fully with our purpose of providing public service. The enthusiasm with which this topic was received overwhelmed me. Conference participants immediately wanted to get involved, and the “presentation” spontaneously became a “discussion”. Two things were readily apparent: individuals are already doing a lot in the area of giving back, and there are many creative ideas regarding service projects. In an effort to take advantage of the moment, a brainstorming box was created to collect ideas throughout the remainder of the conference.

I can hardly wait to read the suggestions and explore which ones may resonate with our organization and its resources. As I said to the conference participants, it’s like trying on different outfits until we find the best one for the occasion. Brain Gym® International may consider several projects in search of the ones that are the right fit.

Given that the desire to help and empower others is a common denominator found throughout Edu-K’s diverse international community, one would think I would have been more prepared for the group’s passion around this topic. Since that day, I have often wondered why I would have expected anything else! Clearly, there is a readiness, willingness, and ability to move forward regarding public service. The question now is how to best capitalize on the energy of this benevolent nature. While I don’t have all the answers, it seems the time is ripe for us to externalize more deeply the innate sense of giving back that exists within our community.

Special note: check out the course, Giving Back, which is part of the Edu-K curriculum. It was developed by Karen Petersen of Hawaii, and is a wonderful example of a goodwill project.



...the desire to help and empower others is a common denominator found throughout Edu-K’s diverse international community.

Offering Assistance and Awareness as a Hospital Volunteer

Joni Polehna



Since 2005, I have been a Licensed Brain Gym® Instructor/Consultant in Minnesota, USA. As part of a strong regional Brain Gym network, I find many opportunities to serve the community and educate people about our work.

One opportunity I especially enjoy is volunteering at our local hospital, where it is common practice for holistic practitioners to donate time every month. In the Pre- and Post-

I am there for those who desire assistance.

Surgical Unit, the staff is always excited to offer patients the opportunity to enter surgery in a calm state, with positive expectations for a successful outcome and a quick recovery.

What follows is my account of a typical volunteer session. To begin, I introduce myself and offer the patient a relaxation process to help relieve stress before surgery and promote healing afterward. I ask them to notice any pain, anxiety or other emotions that they may be experiencing, and then I document their level of discomfort, from 0-10. As we begin, I encourage them to lie back on the pre-op gurney, and focus on a positive thought or envision being able to do the activities that they have been unable to do because of their pain

or injury. Then I help them relax even further with a simple Brain Gym movement or another technique from my extensive toolbox.

When we’re finished, after about 15-20 minutes, the patient’s discomfort level is reassessed; the intensity has often diminished, while their confidence has often increased. Many patients who say they aren’t anxious beforehand are amazed at how calm they feel afterward. I document the changes that we both noticed, along with the techniques used, and file the form in their chart. I also encourage them to ask for post-operative holistic work, if they so desire.

Patients recovering from day surgery can also benefit from this program, especially when their anesthesia is wearing off: I might demonstrate

There’s always an opportunity to spread an awareness of the powerful benefits of our work!

Balance Buttons for dizziness, Belly Breathing to help relax a tight area, Lazy 8s over incisions, or family

continued on page 20

Cindy's Sense

Cindy Goldade, Faculty Member

Is it easier to balance with strangers, friends, or family? That is a loaded question!

We love our family and friends! And, at times, being heartfully connected may sabotage our balance* facilitation skills and cloud our noticing* abilities. We can get into our heads and over-analyze, believing we know what is best rather than drawing out* of the individual. Sometimes certain family members (or friends) and their related goals* can even trigger an old pattern or a memory, and we might have a brainstem-type freeze response. Any of these reactions can signal that it may be more appropriate for someone else to facilitate, as our own ability may be less than fully accessed.

Recently, a fellow licensed Brain Gym® instructor and friend reached out to schedule a balance with her son. We discussed how hard it sometimes is to work with family members. I nodded emphatically as I recalled how my husband chooses the oddest times to ask, "Could you balance me for _____?" It is at these times I become a model procrastinator and create all sorts of reasons not to accept the balance request...it is too late, it is too early, his voice is teasing, the goal is medical rather than educational, I'm working, I'm relaxing, and so on.

I've noticed a strong correlation between language intention and my willingness to enter into a balance with someone else. When others expect miracles (e.g. "Can you fix this?"), I tend to shy away. Passive aggressive techniques (e.g. "If only you'd...") do not work well with me. Words dripping with sarcasm are a show stopper. Whining usually causes me to reflect back with my own unintentional negativity. Oftentimes, my words and/or my body language say "No"—and I believe that is every facilitator's prerogative. While I strive to be a positive resource for others, I also honor my own limitations, such as recognizing when the time or fit is not quite right.

Yet, when someone inquires with curiosity and openness I step forward. This year, two such experiences stand out. The wife of a long-time friend has suffered for years with vestibular issues and the secondary effects of anxiety/depression. She was curious as to whether there was any possibility of Edu-K* helping her. Her open attitude allowed me to respond and explain how we are dynamic beings and that purposeful movement may indeed improve her equilibrium.

The other example was a cousin inquiring about whether



Holding ourselves to a high level of personal and professional integrity is one of the ultimate goals.

Edu-K work could help a smoking addiction. Such an open-ended, non-threatening question allowed me to share my understanding of the relationship between addictions and the brain, along with relevant case studies I've read. She wasn't looking for a quick fix, but rather gathering data to prepare for the day that her mind and body are ready for change.

Conversing with family and friends is very different than answering a "cold-call" about Brain Gym balances. A cold-call holds no history, no pre-conceived notions. It is initially void of emotional attachment. On the contrary, those close to us know our past and we know theirs. It can be challenging to hold a neutral space for optimal noticing to occur when all those emotional markers of our prior experiences are sending signals!

What to do? Recognize every opportunity has a choice embedded in it. When invited to facilitate a balance for someone else, possibilities can cross the spectrum between yes and no, including the option of referring them to a colleague. When we increase our awareness of language intention, and notice the potential impact of family and friendship dynamics, we can then make informed decisions. Holding ourselves to a high level of personal and professional integrity is one of the ultimate goals.

On the Go!

"Life is like riding a bicycle. To keep your balance, you must keep moving."

- Albert Einstein

"If you want to live a happy life, tie it to a goal, not to people or things."

- Albert Einstein

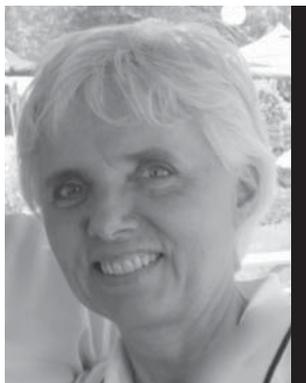
"The vestibular system that controls how the eyes will move is tied directly to the ears and the core muscles of the trunk,..."

- *Playing in the Unified Field*, 39
Carla Hannaford



How Do You Know What He Wants?

Cecilia (Freeman) Koester, MEd



What do I do with a child who... walks with a homolateral* gait, does not use words to express himself, is blind, feeds himself independently with finger foods though needs assistance to use a spoon or fork? This little 8-year-old boy, who is small in stature though big in his quest for learning, fills my heart with every frown of his frustration and each huge smile of accomplishment. Because Brendan uses shrill noises to express his agitation, and relaxed looks of contentment to express his internal joy, I must learn how to communicate with him so he can experience self awareness. Perhaps one day he will be able to notice for himself what steps he can take to be more independent.

It is important that I offer Brendan a structure that allows him to retain new learning as a fully integrated permanent resource. How do I engage him so he can learn how to learn? I invite his curiosity about the unique world in which he lives—even if that world is seemingly filled with personal struggle, an inability to control his own musculature, and a constant search for words and gestures to express himself. My intention is to help Brendan to self-identify, and to find solace and levity within.

Brendan, like every child and adult, deserves encouragement and permission to be aware and to trust his own noticing* ability. This leads to the joy of exploration, the excitement of

discovery and the confident embodiment of new learning. Have you ever observed a typically-functioning young child at play? He goes from moment to moment with great curiosity, exploring and discovering life. As we deepen our noticing skills, we too can achieve such a non-judgmental state. I see that I need to be fully present with Brendan, without discerning or evaluating why a particular behavior or movement pattern might be in place.

My past experience and intuition are sources of knowledge and enrichment that need to remain in the background of my consciousness as I work/play with Brendan. Since energy follows attention, I want my primary focus to be on finding a pathway to new development. I watch Brendan spastically move his body about in a seeming effort to free pent-up neurological flow or emotional frustration. It appears to me that his inner sense of rhythm is in a “log jam.” I imitate this movement pattern in my own body and come to sense/feel/know what I want if my body is stuck in this nuance of behavior. The shriek that my own voice releases is a desperate cry for help to find a rhythm in my own learning as well as a more natural pattern of movement.

Brendan’s Mom will say, “How do you know what he wants? You seem to

know exactly where to begin with him.” My reply is that I don’t know where to begin; I simply begin. I tell his Mom that I just have the audacity to say out loud what comes to mind. And I encourage her to remember what it was like when Brendan was an infant. How did she know what he wanted/needed? She said that she could tell by the tone of a sound or the subtle movement of Brendan’s body. This is the simplicity of noticing: being present and trusting.

This ability to be present with Brendan, have faith in what he is showing me, and trust my intuition shows respectful attention and consideration for him. Then I begin to establish a container for our work/play together, creating a space for Brendan to grow and notice what and how things are manifesting for him.

I weave simple movement patterns that will perhaps create more coherence within Brendan’s mind/body system. I specifically notice what quiets him so that his play is restful rather than a struggle. As we interact, I show Mom how to build a day where her son can feel relaxed and ease into useful movements rather than random, spastic activity.

After each session, Mom is deeply moved by Brendan’s progress and appreciates her own increased level of noticing. Through his sounds, movements and facial expressions, she learns more readily what he is requesting. Mom holds the intention that one day Brendan will be able to give attention to his own state of being and self-discovery.

Observe. Imitate. Imagine. Feel. Intend. Show. Practice. Encourage. Celebrate.



Brendan and Mom doing Navel Radiation

QUESTIONS TO PONDER ABOUT NOTICING:

- * Am I grounded in the present time?
- * Am I in a non-judgment frame of mind?
- * What do I look for so I know where to begin?
- * Are my skills and abilities present in who I am so I can simultaneously co-discover and/or co-create the solution with the child I am assisting?
- * How can I create a space where the child can recognize his own strengths and challenges so he can find his own new learning?
- * Is there a way for me to measure how effective my solution is?

Cecilia (Freeman) Koester, MEd., is author, with Gail Dennison, of I Am the Child: Using Brain Gym® With Children Who Have Special Needs (1998, 2010) and Movement Based Learning for Children of All Abilities (2006). She has been in the field of Special Needs as a classroom teacher and private consultant for over thirty years. Cece is a licensed Brain Gym consultant who has developed and teaches the Brain Gym for Special Education Providers workshop. She presently is developing a Teacher Training for the same.

PLAY: Get Your Giggle On

Humorous Highlights from the 2010 Conference



&



were two nametags used in the evenings by the administration as they noticed their

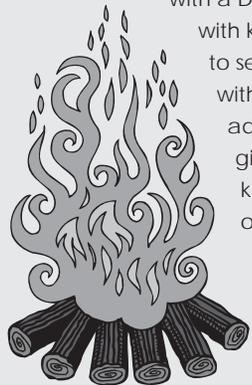
energy level and modeled self-responsibility at the annual conference last month held in Massachusetts, USA. This event drew 120 individuals enthusiastic about the relationship between learning and moving. Since humor and laughter go along with moving, we wanted to share a few of the giggles with you!

Imagine you are a chipmunk in a tree overlooking a hiking trail that winds around the lake and two adults with their "Self Care" nametags displayed come vigorously hiking and tripping over roots and rocks. What makes this especially hilarious is observing these two manage the path's obstacles while speaking into a 2x4 inch machine, aka cell phone, recording their conversation as they are animatedly creating solutions for upcoming events or worldwide issues.



Picture the evenings...a campfire with thirty people singing songs and telling jokes. Who knew there was an entertainer hiding in so many? The Improv the next night was vibrant and boisterous as instruments were played, easels were utilized for artistic expression and random materials (e.g. swim noodles, streamers, balloons) became dancing companions. And the party...what was intended to be a regular dinner and dance

with a DJ, turned into line dancing sometimes infused with kickboxing, and hysterical games. It was a sight to see novices attempting to create balloon animals with no training. And that's not to mention grown adults chasing a DJ around banquet tables to give a High 5 for the purpose of gaining points for knowing the name of a song...All for the silly fun of it!



The venue was beautiful and brought out our innate smiles. The 2010 Annual Brain Gym® Conference reiterated that learning can indeed be fun and playful!

Kinesiology for the Geriatric Population

Zofi Graczyk

My Name is Zofi Graczyk MSc, Ph.D., and I have been a Licensed Brain Gym® Instructor since 2006. I am a very energetic person, with an interest in long and short-term behavioral patterns. In my travels throughout the world, I have acquired a broad knowledge of different cultures, religions and ethnic customs. My passion involves understanding current human nature. In many cases I have found that when clinical medicine doesn't provide a solution - alternative therapy does!

Here is an example of how I used Brain Gym® movements with a 93-year-old woman, Valeria, who was

essentially return to the life she had before her surgery. Her goal was positive, active, clear and energetic; however, I asked an additional question – which of her activities

She wanted to
enjoy her meals
and swallow
everything easily
once again.

would she specifically like to have back? She wanted to enjoy her meals and swallow everything easily once again.

With a condition called dysphagia, she could not swallow on her own. Although dysphagia can be the result of stroke, it can also arise from damage to the patient's dominant motor cortex. With my physiology background, hypnotherapy experience and kinesiological point of view, I wanted to help re-educate my client, to teach her to swallow, and thus to improve her everyday living.

Valeria was not mobile because of the constant connection to the feeding tube. Most of the time she was depressed and in pain, refusing to take pain medicine. However, she was still able to do some movements as described by Paul and Gail Dennison in *Personalized Whole Brain Integration*. Once or twice a week, she and I practiced PACE* as well as some of the action balances from Brain Gym 101.

Over time, her demeanor changed from unhappy to alert and



The author, Zofi, with her client, Valeria

diagnosed with gum cancer. After surgery, she was on a feeding tube and unable to move, although her mind still worked very well.

In our first balance* session, Valeria decided on an ambitious goal: to

communicative, even smiling! After our sessions, she would tell me stories about her life and seemed happy to recall them. After six weeks of balancing, Valeria's attitude changed so much that she asked her physician to remove the feeding tube. After that, she gradually returned to swallowing on her own.

For years, Kinesiology has been proven to resolve many clinical conditions such as ADD, ADHD, autism and aggressive behavior. It has helped children attain better grades and social skills, and helped adults relieve stress, improve mood, and achieve positive results in their daily lives. I'm happy that Educational Kinesiology* could help Valeria improve the quality of her life.



Valeria six weeks later

Zofi Graczyk earned her Master's Degree in Psychology and her Ph.D. in Neurophysiology. In 2006 she became a licensed Brain Gym® Instructor/Consultant. She currently implements her knowledge and experience with kinesiology in different psychotherapeutic cases. zofigraczyk@yahoo.com

Offering Assistance . . .

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assisted Calf Pumps (gently pushing the foot toward the shin) to help release the fear response to surgery that some patients hold in their lower legs.

Occasionally, I offer my services to the hospital staff as they are reviewing charts in the unit station. They're often grateful for a tip on a Brain Gym movement or Touch for Health* technique to address an issue that they may be experiencing.

One never knows what may be encountered when showing up to volunteer, but I approach it with the intention that I am there for those who desire assistance. There's always an opportunity to spread an awareness of the powerful benefits of our work!

Joni has been a Certified Therapeutic Recreation Specialist for over thirty years. She became a licensed Brain Gym® consultant in 2005 and enjoys promoting alternative modalities throughout the St. Paul, MN area.

The Metaphor of the X, Part 2 "Living from the Core"

Gloria A. Kuhs



In the Brain Gym® program, the metaphor of the X is foundational to structural stability and the resulting ease of learning. As we discussed in Part One (May 2010), the X refers to the relationship between opposite hips and shoulders—the postural core of the body—as well as to grounded binocular vision and binaural hearing (eye-movement and head turning). These postural muscles work with the vestibular system*, neocortex, and eyes; a relationship that impacts thinking abilities. The integration of this system gives us control over gross-motor skills, which in turn prepares us for ease of fine-motor coordination. Hence, both the gross-motor skills needed for walking and running, and the fine-motor coordination needed for reading and writing have their basis at the core of the body. Without such integration, learning is inhibited by needless muscular tension, sensory compensation, and cognitive and emotional stress. In essence, we are either "living from the core" or we are compensating.

The core is generally thought of as the abdominal muscles. However, in Edu-K*, we refer to the postural muscles of the entire torso, including: the pectoralis clavicular major and minor, trapezius group, latissimus dorsi, psoas, quadratus lumborum, iliacus, piriformis, neck flexors and extensors, supraspinatus, anterior serratus, sacrospinalis, abdominals, teres major and minor, and gluteus maximus and medius.

According to Gail Dennison, co-founder of Edu-K, the word "core" refers to the central, innermost, or most essential part of something. The muscles at the core of the body are generally thought of as the stabilizing transverse abdominal muscles that create a horizontal girdle around the waist, hold the ribcage level, and, working together with the pelvic floor, hold the organs in place. In modern culture, due largely to excessive sitting, the tailbone becomes tucked, weakening this system and confounding the lower part of the X in both the front and back of the body.¹

In Edu-K, the X defines simple geometric angles—a unifying image—that we can use to visualize and move toward correct skeletal alignment with postural muscles balanced and working synergistically: side to side, up to down, and back to front.²

Brain Gym and Edu-K activities can help develop new movement patterns which support the X, especially the Cross Crawl, Cross Crawl Sit-Ups, the Energizer, Dennison Laterality Repatterning*, Three Dimension Repatterning*, Total Core Repatterning*, Core Activation*, all of the Lengthening Activities*, the Energy Exercise*

¹ Dennison, Gail E, personal communication to the author, June 14, 2010.

² Dennison, Paul E. and Gail E. Dennison, *Brain Gym® Teacher's Edition*. Ventura, CA: Hearts at Play, Inc., 2010 (50).

“Buttons”, Pelvic 8s, and Think of an X. However, when we observe a lack of core integration, we do not automatically assign these specific activities. Rather, Edu-K teaches us to become aware of the movements we are drawn to; we learn to follow our own body wisdom through noticing* or muscle checking*.

In Edu-K, noticing is considered one of the most valuable skills we can develop. We learn that teaching a student to notice her sensorimotor process is more effective than “prescribing” certain movements. While there are many Brain Gym activities that support alignment, it is important for the student to follow her own innate intelligence. A case in point comes from my own experience. During my first Brain Gym class, while doing Cross Crawl Sit-ups, I immediately noticed I was tensing my thighs, back, shoulders, arms, neck, face and abdominals. In a very short time my breathing became labored, I felt sweaty, and my muscles ached. I was not out of shape; these were compensations for a lack of integrated core postural muscles. The X was not fully developed at the core.

Using noticing, I then chose to do only the Brain Gym movements I enjoyed while taking more Brain Gym classes. Three months later, I felt like doing Cross Crawl Sit-ups again. I was amazed at how effortless this movement had become! I was now relaxed, no longer recruiting muscles from all over my body to do the work of the core. The Brain Gym movements and balances had helped me develop a more efficient proprioceptive communication system, allowing me to isolate, organize, coordinate, differentiate, and use more efficiently only the

muscles required to do that action. I was easily achieving greater development of the X at my core.

As these muscles became more integrated, so did the teaming of my eyes. Letters stopped jumping around and stayed still when I read. Suddenly, my attention was floating across the page as I read groups of words at a time. The difference was amazing! This experience not only revealed to me the relationship between the core muscles of the body and the eyes, it also reinforced the value of noticing and following the body’s wisdom when choosing Brain Gym movements and balances.

The metaphor of the X began to take on a greater significance. I realized by thinking of, drawing, or imagining an X internally connecting opposite shoulders to opposite hips³, our systems are reminded of the visual, auditory, kinesthetic, and core integration we develop through doing Brain Gym activities. This is our foundation for learning, and the metaphor of the X represents this integration. When we are truly “living from the core” we are ready to move into our greater potential.

Gloria A. Kuhs is a Licensed Brain Gym® Instructor and Consultant in Laguna Hills, Ca. In addition to private consultations, she teaches Brain Gym 101, Optimal Brain Organization, and Visioncircles, and has served on the board of directors for the Educational Kinesiology Foundation (2002-2005). Gloria home schools and is married with two children.

³ Dennison, Paul E. and Gail E. Dennison, *Brain Gym® Teacher’s Edition*. Ventura, CA: Hearts at Play, Inc., 2010 (50).

*a reference list of edu-k terms

Balance, balancing, balance process - a process utilizing Edu-K’s Five Steps to Easy Learning that regulates conflicts between structure and function.

Brain Gym® - a series of specifically conceived movements that addresses the physical skills of learning (for example: visual, auditory). Brain Gym activities contain three categories of movements: **The Energy Exercises** to develop awareness of the body as the central reference for all directional movements; **The Lengthening Activities** to facilitate skills of focus and attention; and **The Midline Movements** for physical coordination as well as accessing of both analytical and spatial information.

Core activation - a process for helping to coordinate and stabilize hip and shoulder movement

Dennison Laterality Repatterning (DLR) - a five-step process that stimulates key stages of laterality from infancy through walking, and that helps to free compensatory visual or postural habits (see *Edu-K for Kids* by Dennison and Dennison).

Drawing out - in education, leading forth or educing learning by making a match between physical readiness and a desired skill

Educational Kinesiology (Edu-K) - the study of movement and its relationship to whole-brain learning; a process for drawing out innate learning abilities through the understanding of movement and its relationship to whole-brain learning patterns; the application of kinesthetics (movement) to the study of whole-brain integration for purposes of alleviating stress and maximizing the full learning potential.

Energy exercises - the series of Brain Gym activities designed to facilitate an awareness of the body as the central reference for all directional movement, thus providing a kinesthetic bridge for skills of organization and abstract thought; the ability to cross the top-bottom midline of the brain and postural system, thus integrating rational thinking with emotional responses

Five Steps to Easy Learning - a process unique to Edu-K that anchors new learning to movement experiences

Goal - the process, preliminary to a balance, of identifying the balance recipient’s stated aim

Homolateral - involuntarily choosing to access only one cerebral hemisphere, thus blocking integrated thought and movement

in-depth checks - processes for exploring the physical skills involved in specific areas of learning

Lengthening Activities - a series of Brain Gym activities designed to facilitate the ability to cross the back-front-midline of the brain and postural system, thus integrating meaningful intention with habituated movement responses

Muscle check, muscle checking - a kinesiological technique, used in Edu-K for two purposes: 1) to anchor or positively reinforce newly integrated learning and 2) to measure the relative strength of a muscle for the purpose of inferring brain functions relevant to educators

Noticing - giving attention to one's state of being; self-observation

PACE - an acronym (Positive, Active, Clear, Energetic) for a four-step learning-readiness technique that an individual may use to settle in to his or her own best rhythm and timing for learning

Proprioception - the “brain cells” in the muscles; from the Latin word, “proprio,” which translates to “within the body,” and the English word “receptive”; the physical awareness gained through muscles, joints, and other receptors within the body

Three Dimension Repatterning - a variation of Dennison Laterality Repatterning applied to integration of the front/back, top/bottom, and left/right brain hemispheres

Total Core Repatterning Balance - the process oriented to the integration of those core postural reflexes of the body often unavailable due to incomplete development in infancy, taught in a course by the same name

Touch for Health® - a process (from the book by that name, written by John Thie, D.C.) for toning and stimulating individual muscles and muscle systems by activating the lymphatic, vascular, or meridian system of the body

Vestibular system - the sensory system with receptors in the inner ear that helps us keep our balance by responding to changes in head position; this system is constantly coordinating with the eyes, muscles, and joints to keep us oriented to gravity and to how we balance and move the body.

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