

TAKE CARE OF YOUR EYES

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If you have read my previous article you will remember that relaxation is the basis for rehabilitation of eyesight, and that blinking is the natural way to keep the eyes clean and to control the amount of light that falls on the retina.

Another step towards better sight is to re-educate afflicted eyes to the necessity of movement. Aldous Huxley writes, "Movement is one of the indispensable conditions of seeing and perceiving."

The point of reception for sharpest vision is a small area in the retina called the macula. In the centre is a tiny depression. This foveal depression vibrates with the multiple clusters of nerve endings. Its function is to hunt for contrasts of light and dark, thus bringing into relief the objects viewed. That is the function of normal eyes.

Consider its size, that of a pin's head. Consider the millions of nerve endings involved, and you will easily realise its conditions when eyes become strained. This should explain to you the necessity of movement.

Rhythmic movement of the whole body will teach the eyes to shift.

This is done by standing with the feet a few inches apart and swaying gently from side to side, while turning the head and shoulders at the same time.

Stand facing a window, and when you swing round your shoulders should be parallel with the wall on your left and then the wall on your right. The movement should be done to slow waltz time.

Do not think about your eyes or try to see any passing object. Just remember that the movement is starting up vibrations which gradually improve the vision, and stimulate circulation in the eyes.

The whole body benefits from the rhythmic swaying, and many people find it beneficial to do it last thing at night as it helps to restful sleep.

Many people in the forties and later take to glasses because there is a failure to read at the near point. There are several reasons for this condition. The muscles for near accommodation have lost their tonicity. There is nervous tension throughout the whole body. A tendency to extraversion, to think away from one's self, could affect the near point. But all these reasons add up to the fact that print becomes difficult, and later, impossible to read within the normal distance of twelve inches.

How to regain the near point?

Hold some print about 10" from the nose and move it in and out. Do not try to read it as it moves. Turn the print upside down if the temptation is too much. The eyes will signal the in and out movement to the brain, which will order the muscles of accommodation to focus within reading distance—but NOT at a fixed distance. After a few seconds close the eyes and remember the movement. Then open, turn the print the right way up, and note if it looks blacker or if any of the words flash momentarily out. Remember to palm before repeating the exercise.

Most of us, whether in the office or the home, are looking downward for the greater part of the day. So form the habit of glancing up and blinking at a distant object every little while, and you will break the continuous strain of the downward angle.

Think of what you are looking at before trying to read. Outline the shape of the book or paper with your nose—the eyes will follow its central directive. Then outline the block of print. Swing your nose along the white lines between the print and blink at the spaces between the words. All these movements help to shift the eyes within reading distance.

If reading is very difficult, start on a coloured postcard with plenty of detail. (Colour is a stimulant.) Pick out first the reds and then the blues. Close the eyes and remember their positions. Then open, and the colours will appear brighter, and maybe more detail will become apparent.

Remember the visual centre of the brain is only too eager to co-operate and interpret.

So give your eyes a chance.

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