

Welcome to Our Learn Your Brain Seminar



With Dr. Nita Matthews-Morgan
and
Josh Matthews-Morgan



[Learn Your Brain](#)

www.learnyourbrain.com

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[Learn Your Brain](#)

Introduction: Why You Need Learn Your Brain

Humans are natural learners when allowed to move, explore, and engage with the world in a relaxed way. You are designed to move with your whole body as you interact in the three-dimensional world.

You as a young child

As a baby, you needed to crawl and go through other necessary developmental stages to develop both sides of your body, eyes and ears and to feel stable and coordinated. In addition to developing both sides of your body, you also develop a preferred eye, ear, hand, or foot. The fact that you use both sides of your body for vision, hearing, hand-eye coordination, and whole-body movement allows you to compensate with one side of your body when the other side is unavailable.



When you started school, you needed to be able to use your two eyes, two hands, and (consequently) two sides of the brain. Yet, as young children, we weren't always developmentally ready for the skills of up-close academic work. We develop stress patterns and compensations in order to survive in school. And as adults many of us continue the same learning habits that slowed us down in school. We learn to favor one side of our brain and just use one side of our bodies, which places us under a lot of stress. We call this the unintegrated state. For vitality and ease of learning, you need to be able to access both hemispheres of your brain and both eyes and ears.

How Movement Helps You Learn

Science has proven that you need to move in order for your brain to work in its optimal state. Movement was crucial for developing your brain as a child. But it's just as important for you now that you're an adult!

Here are some of the benefits of movement to your brain and body.

- Movement awakens and activates many of your mental capacities.
- Movement integrates and anchors new information and experience into your neural networks (the system of connections between all your brain cells that help you think and store information).
- An action must be used to anchor new information so that you can remember it. Many people find that talking anchors thoughts. This is especially true if you are a kinesthetic learner (movement helps you learn).
- The two areas of the brain responsible for moving your muscles are also important for coordinating your thoughts.
- If you missed the vitally important crawling stage, you may have learning difficulties now. Crawling develops the connection between the two hemispheres of the brain. It also gets both your eyes, ears, arms and legs working together.
- Coordinated movement stimulates the growth of your brain cells and increases the neural connections in your brain.
- Exercising the eyes strengthens your eye muscles so your



eyes can track along the page together. This helps you focus and concentrate when reading.

- Getting up and moving while you study sends more blood to your brain. Even just standing increases blood flow and oxygen to your brain. You are more focused when you stand than when you sit.
- Cross lateral movements (for example, the cross crawl movement we share) really help students who are sleepy, overwhelmed, frustrated or learning blocked.
- At least half of learners need to move a lot while learning. One fourth of learners need occasional movement to learn and one fourth of learners need minimal movement while learning. So that means **75% of students need to move to learn!**



The Problem with School



Schools and teachers value verbal and mathematical/skills (just think about what you were tested on in the SAT). However, they often ignore the other types of intelligence that have been discovered: kinesthetic, visual/spatial, musical, interpersonal, intrapersonal, etc.

Our educational system also favors a specific learning style: people who are logical thinkers and who learn by seeing and hearing (visual and auditory). These “ideal learners” can easily listen to and watch the professor and restate what they hear and see in a logical, linear fashion.

However, research by Dr. Carla Hannaford, a renowned biologist and educator, shows that 50% of students are not auditory learners, and yet lecturing is our primary way of teaching. These students who are not auditory learners are at a disadvantage.

In fact, on average the type of learners that school is designed for make up only 15% of the population!

In other words, if you aren't one of the 15% who are so-called “ideal learners,” then you have experienced some stress and struggle in school. So finding ways to relieve your stress is important for your learning. The information in this seminar helps you relieve stress and access the verbal/logical part of your brain so school becomes easier.

How Your Learning Gets Blocked

The stress we experience at home and in school can lead to learning blocks.

Here are some examples of how stress affects learning:

- Stress is the root cause of many of the problems that we see in people that have been labeled hyperactive, ADD/ADHD, and dyslexic.
- When you learn something under stress (for example, cramming facts into your head before a test), your brain gets used to learning under stress. You may actually think you do your best work when you're all stressed out, so you procrastinate on getting your work done. Research, however, shows this is not true.
- You can learn even when you're under stress but learning is more difficult and certainly not optimal.



- Just being in school may have been stressful for you when you were younger, so now you feel stress around learning in general.
- You might spend too much time on activities like watching TV or playing video games. Looking at a screen for too long makes your eyes go

into ocular lock (staring). Staring puts stress on the muscles around your eyes so they have trouble moving easily while you read.

- Also, when you sit for more than 20 minutes your muscles tighten and you have trouble focusing. (Think about how long some of your lecture classes are!)
- Going to lecture classes can stress you out. Studies show that around 50% of students are not auditory learners, yet most college professors only lecture in their classes.
- When you're under stress, your brain literally can't think clearly or learn easily because you don't have the right brain chemicals. Your brain is also not making the brainwaves you need to relax and pay attention. Learning under stress is like being in class with parts of your brain shut off.

The movements taught in this Learn Your Brain Seminar helps you reconnect to your natural use of muscles. These movements make learning easier and more enjoyable.

Facts About How We We Learn



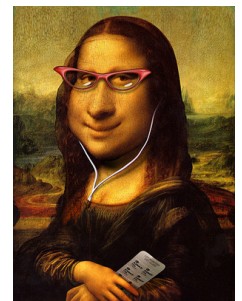
10% of what we read

20% of what we hear



30% of what we see

**50% of what we see
and hear**



70% of what we discuss

**80% of what we
experience personally**



**95% of what we teach
someone else**

Water Facts

Do you ever feel a little sluggish mentally, like your brain feels fuzzy and your thoughts aren't as clear as usual?

Did you know that you could just be dehydrated?

The simple fact of life is that your brain and your body needs water, and lots of it, to function at their best.



Here are just a few facts about water that might surprise you:

- Your brain is about 75% water and your body is made up of around 60 -70% water.
- Your brain needs plenty of water for the electrical impulses (ie. your thoughts) to flow freely.
- Your brain needs water to remember new information that you've learned. You actually get "smarter" when you're well hydrated.
- Water is especially important before you take a test or when you're under stress because your brain uses 50% more water than normal to compensate for your stressful situation.
- 75% of Americans are chronically dehydrated!
- In fact, in the U.S., lack of water is the number one reason people get tired during the day.
- Decreasing the amount of water you drink by just 2% will make your brain feel fuzzy and give you problems with short-term memory.
- You can live about a month without food, but only a week without water.
- There are tons of health benefits to drinking lots of water: it protects your organs and tissues; removes waste; carries important nutrients to

all the cells in your body; helps with digestion; and makes your liver work better. (This is really important for college students.) ;)

If that's not enough reason to start drinking more water, this little factoid just might shock you enough to drive the point home...

Do you know what policemen and firefighters use to clean up blood off the street after nasty car accidents?

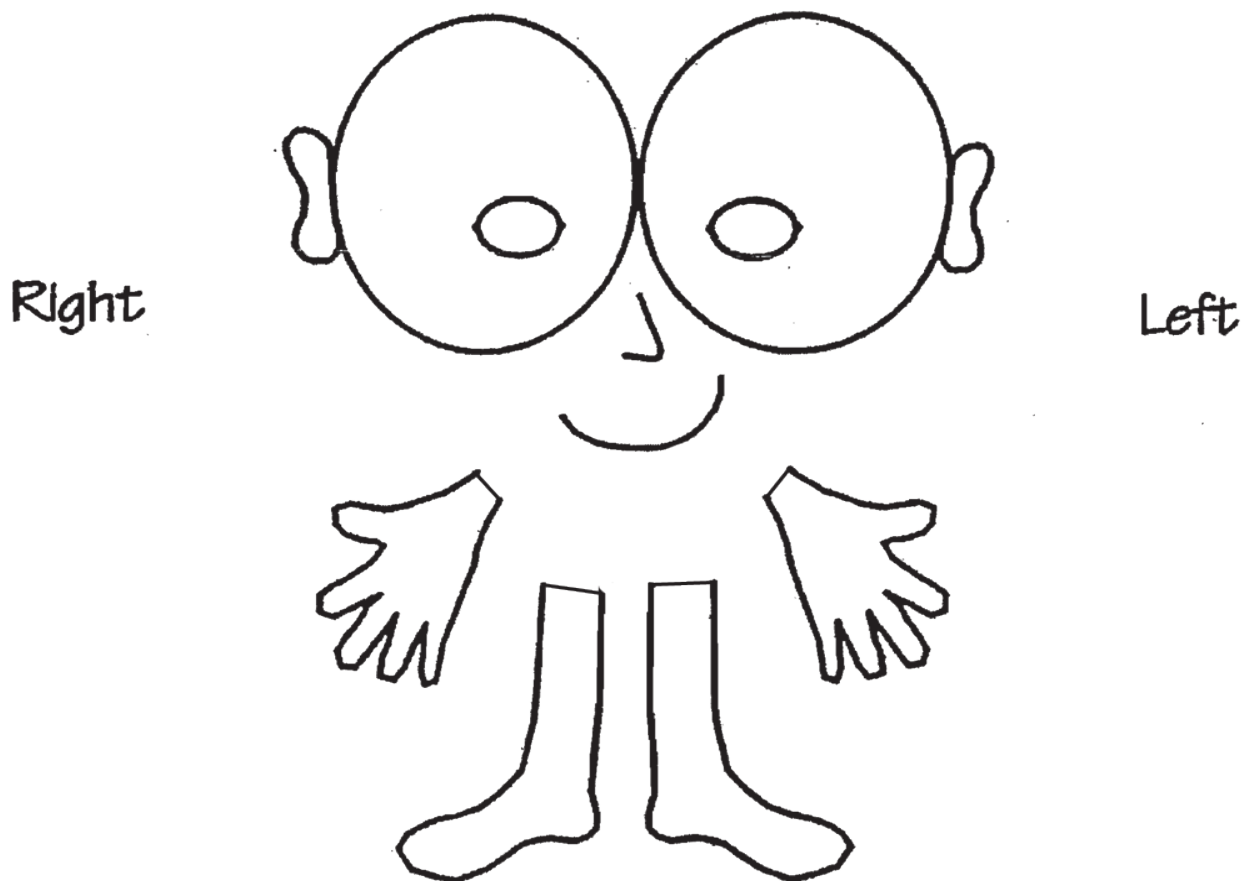
A little-known drink called Coca-Cola.

The acid in Coke literally eats away the blood off the street. Imagine what it's doing inside your body!

So next time you're feeling tired or thirsty, don't reach for a soft drink. Reach for a nice cold glass of H_2O . Your brain will thank you.



Your Learning Profile

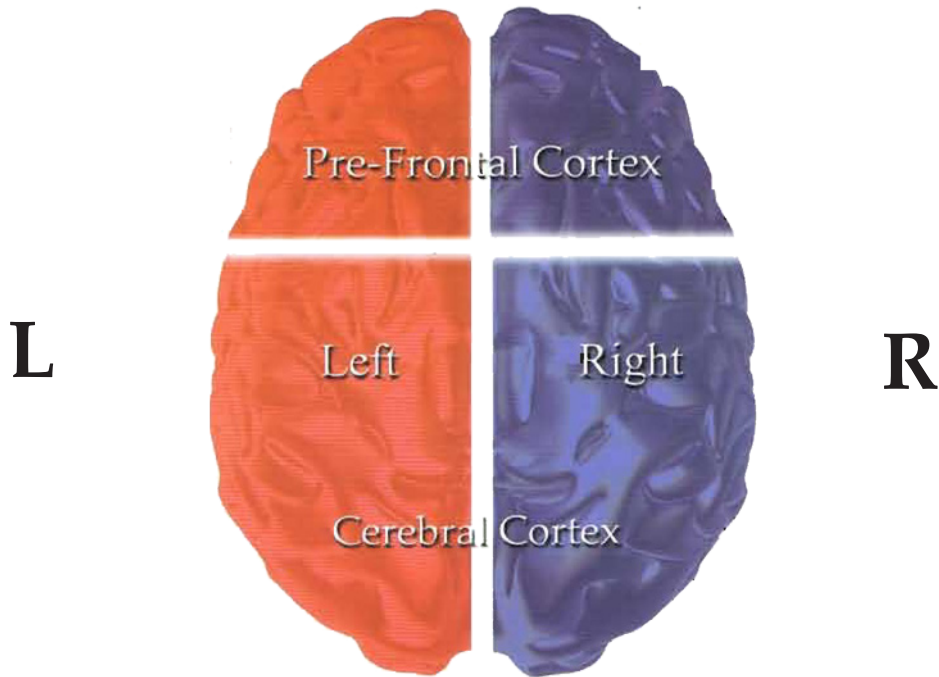


Characteristics of Left (Logic) and Right (Gestalt) Brain



Left (Logic) Brain	Right (Gestalt) Brain
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Involved in movement of right side of the body• Starts with the pieces first• Planned, structured, and orderly• Future and past oriented• Aware of time• Controls feelings• Reasons logically• Looks at differences• Tells events accurately with facts• Uses language to make explanations• Listens for direction and guidance• Likes automatic routines	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Involved in movement of the left side of the body• Sees the whole picture first• Spontaneous, fluid• Now oriented• Less time sense• Free with feelings• Reasons intuitively• Looks at similarities• Elaborates when telling events• Explains by demonstrating• Starts without waiting for directions• Like novelty

Note: People who have easy access to both hemispheres will show both logical (left) and gestalt (right) behaviors.



<u>Left Under Stress</u>	<u>Right Under Stress</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Tries harder• With lots of effort• Without results• Without comprehension• Without joy• Loses the big picture of why they're doing something	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Loses the ability to reason well• Acts without thinking• Feels overwhelmed• Has trouble expressing themselves• Cannot remember details• Can appear overly emotional, sensitive or spacy

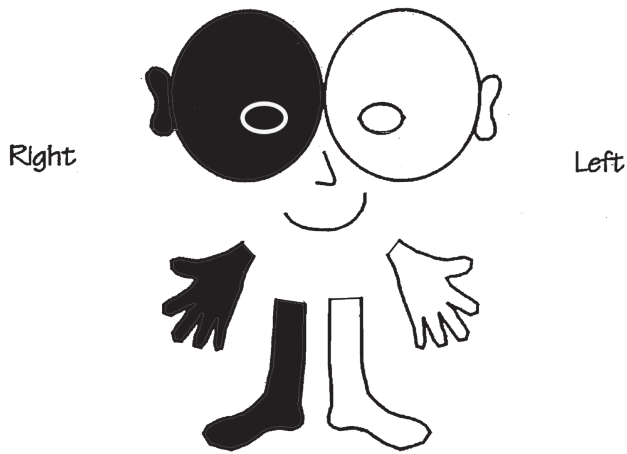
How “Right-Brain” (Gestalt) People Behave

1. Appear to daydream.
2. Talk in phrases or leave words out when talking.
3. Use fingers to count.
4. Draw pictures on the corners of notes or homework pages.
5. May have difficulty following directions.
6. Make faces and gesture with body when communicating.
7. Are able to recall places and events, but have difficulty remembering names, letters and numbers.
8. Are on the move most of the time.
9. Like to work part-way out of the seat or standing up. But since they can't, they **usually jiggle some part of their body** during lectures or even during normal conversation.
10. May exaggerate when re-telling an event in which they've been involved.
11. Often have messy work and living spaces (they often have a “piling” system instead of a “filing” system).
12. Have difficulty completing their work on time.
13. May like to take things apart and put them back together again.
14. Can be impulsive.
15. Tend to be more “touchy-feely” and enjoy physical contact with people more.
16. May be good in athletics, but may struggle in subjects like English or math.
17. When giving the right answer to a question, may be unable to tell you where it came from.
18. Will often give responses that are unrelated to what is being discussed.



Note: Not all right-brained people have all of the above characteristics.

Nita's Profile



Characteristics of Nita's profile

Gestalt (right) Brain Dominant

Seeing, hearing, speaking and moving is difficult under stress.

Nita learns best through movement and by focusing on the whole picture and the context of what she's learning. She learns material that is emotionally relevant to her.

- She needs to move while she processes information and it's helpful to have minimal external stimuli. (music, noise, etc.)
- When she's relaxed she can see, hear and easily communicate the details and sequence of information, both verbally and written. If she's stressed she cannot see, hear or communicate easily. She will only see the forest and not the individual trees.
- She doesn't usually like following step-by-step instructions. She tends to start by imagining the end result and then intuitively doing what seems appropriate.
- Her movements are usually spontaneous and fluid when she's relaxed. However, when she's under stress she may move forward with caution, feeling clumsy and stuck.
- Nita may have difficulty communicating, seeing, listening and remembering when she's stressed out. If she has a lot to do, she'll see the big picture of all she has to do but she needs help knowing how to organize it so she can start.
- This profile was thought to be Einstein's profile. Observations about Einstein's life and how he learned suggest he was this kind of learner.

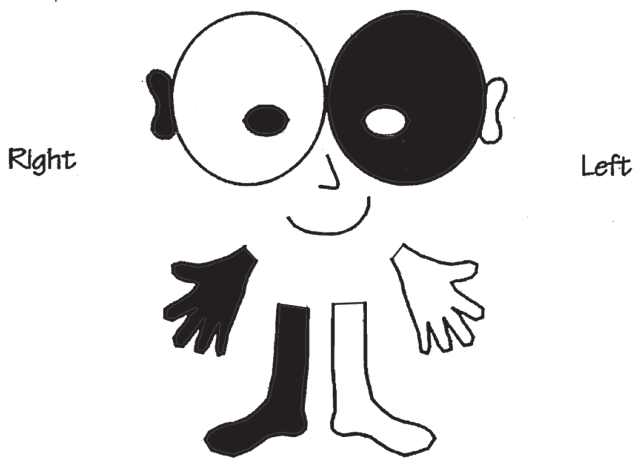
Josh's Profile

Characteristics of Josh's profile

Logic (left) Brain Dominant

Can easily see, hear, communicate, and move under stress.

Josh learns best by focusing on the details. He processes by analyzing, talking, and writing.



- He prefers structured learning and likes information that is structured and orderly.
- As both an auditory and visual learner, he is able to pick up the details of information through his eyes and ears even under stress.
- Josh easily learns through words and language (both oral and written).
- He has the ability to follow step-by-step visual and auditory instructions.
- His movements tend to be planned; he thinks before moving. He's able to move forward even under stress.
- If he is stressed he may have difficulty seeing the big picture ("can't see the forest for the trees").
- His biggest challenge is that he'll lose sight of the big picture (gestalt). Because his dominant hand, eye, ear and foot are all opposite the logic (left) hemisphere, he may have a hard time accessing his gestalt (right) hemisphere when he's stressed.

Profile information taken from *The Dominance Factor* by Dr. Carla Hannaford

PACE Steps

Pretzel

Step 4



I

II

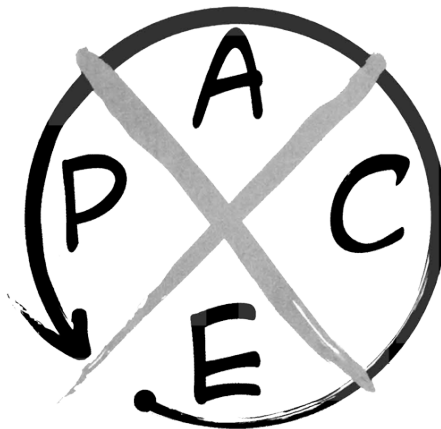
Sipping Water

Step 1



Cross Crawl

Step 3



Brain Buttons

Step 2

How PACE Helps You

PACE is a simple set of four activities that help prepare your brain for learning. Doing PACE takes less than 5 minutes and it is something you can use daily to help you in classes and while you study. You can do this activity before anything you'd like to do with more ease.

PACE stands for **Positive, Active, Clear, and Energetic**, which is how you feel after you've finished doing it.

In the PACE process, you start from the "E" (for "Energetic") and work backward to the P (for "Positive"). Each of the four activities prepares you to do the next.

Step 1:

Energetic- Drink a few sips of water.

Sipping water helps hydrate you, especially when you let the water be absorbed in your mouth, rather than gulping it. Your body is about 70% water. Your brain is an electrical system and it needs water for your thoughts to flow freely. (See the [water facts](#) page for more info.)

Step 2:

Clear- Rub your "brain buttons."

Make a "U" shape with the thumb and index finger of one hand and place these fingers in the small depressions just below your collarbone and about one inch to each side of your breastbone. Rub the points at your collarbone for about 30 seconds as you move your eyes slowly to the left and right along a horizontal line.

Rubbing your Brain Buttons helps stimulate blood flow to your brain so you can think more clearly. Also, having your hand on your belly button gives you a feeling of the midline of your body. Your eyes have to cross the “visual midline” of your body in order to read with ease.

Step 3:

Active. Do several sets of “cross crawls.”

Raise your left leg and touch it with your right hand or elbow. Then raise your right leg and touch it with your left hand or elbow. This activity is most effective when you take your time and do it slowly.

Doing the cross crawl activates both sides of the body, which in turn activates both hemispheres of your brain. It also strengthens the connection between your two hemispheres so you have easier access to your whole brain.

Step 4:

Positive. Sit in a pretzel until you feel calm and centered (up to two minutes).

First cross one ankle over the other while you’re sitting or standing. Then stretch your arms out with the back of your hands together and the thumbs pointing down. Now lift one hand over the other so that your palms face each other and lace your fingers together. Then roll your hands in and rest them on your chest with your elbows down. Finally, rest your tongue on the roof of your mouth behind your teeth.

This whole movement stimulates both hemispheres of the brain and helps you move out of the stress response. It supports the parts of your brain responsible for higher order thinking and decision-making (ie.the kind of thinking you need for school).

Supercharge Your Brain Balance

This balance is a series of simple moves that help switch on your whole brain and body around a specific goal. It will take you up to 10 minutes to do this, but the rewards are enormous. Many students have reported that it has helped them resolve major issues around school.

You can use this “balance” for almost any activity you want to improve, including:

- Having more focus in a specific class
- Shifting from procrastinating on a certain project or paper to calm, relaxed, focused productivity
- Changing the way you feel about a particular class or subject that you’ve been struggling with.

Before you do the steps shown below, set a goal and then do a Pre-Check.

GOAL: Your goal should be:

- positive
- active
- specific
- clear

Here are some examples of goals that need improvement. See the improved version below each example:

Unclear goal: I want to stop procrastinating. (negative, not specific)

Great goal: I begin writing my English paper 2 weeks before it’s due and I turn it in on time. (positive, specific, clear)

Unclear goal: I need to stop daydreaming and wasting time in class. (negative, not specific)

Great goal: I easily focus in class and absorb the information while I'm taking good notes.

****Note:** You can use this balance for physical activities, too. Here is one of Josh's goals he used in college to increase his frisbee skills:

Josh's Goal: I throw the frisbee with ease and accuracy; it floats out of my hand and goes exactly where I want it to go.

PRE-CHECK

Imagine yourself doing your goal right now. How do you feel? If you can, roleplay your goal to see if your body and brain are switched on to do it with ease.

STEPS OF THE SUPERCHARGE BALANCE

Step 1:

Do several Cross Crawls.

Look up left*, hum.



*If the Cross Crawl doesn't start to feel easy and fluid, look up right.

Step 2:

Do several Puppet Crawls (bring right arm up above head and bend right knee in towards your chest. Then Switch sides). **MAKE SURE TO COME TO A COMPLETE STOP IN BETWEEN EACH PUPPET CRAWL.**



Look down to right*, count.

*If in the Puppet Crawl you don't feel alert, look down left.

Step 3:

The Integration Metaphor

Pretend to take out both sides of your brain and imagine holding one side in each hand.

Clasp your hands together and bring to heart.

Close your eyes and take 3 deep breaths.



Step 4:

Do several Cross Crawls and let your eyes look in all directions.



Step 5:

Do several Puppet Crawls and let your eyes look in all directions. **MAKE SURE TO COME TO A COMPLETE STOP IN BETWEEN EACH PUPPET CRAWL.**



Step 6:

Finish with a few Cross Crawls and Palming.

POST-CHECK:

Notice changes in your body and your thinking.

Put your goal into action! Have fun doing what you just balanced yourself for!



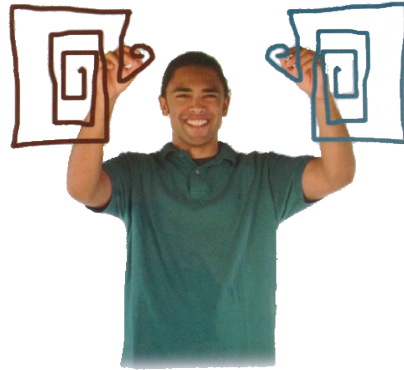


[Watch the Supercharge Your Brain Balance Online](#)

Learn Your Brain Movements For Writing



PACE



Double Doodle



Calf Pump

Use these movements to help you organize your thoughts, and get into the flow for writing.



Lazy 8s



Energy Yawn



Arm Activation

Learn Your Brain Movements For Seeing/Reading



PACE



Neck Rolls



Space Buttons

Use these movements to help your brain get ready for reading comprehension and to get your eyes tracking with ease.



Calf Pump

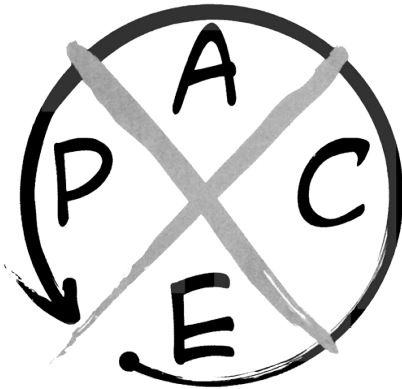


Lazy 8s



Earth Buttons

Learn Your Brain Movements For Listening



PACE



Ear Rolls

Use these movements to
help you take in more in-
formation in your lectures.

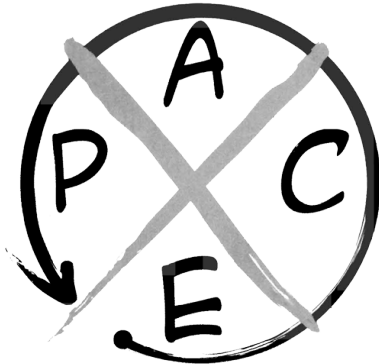


Owl



Energy Yawn

Learn Your Brain Movements For Focus



[PACE](#)



[Gravity Glider](#)



[Grounder](#)

Use these movements
when you're having a
hard time focusing!



[Owl](#)

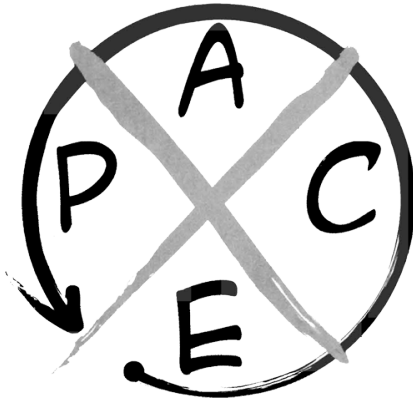


[Calf Pump](#)



[Arm Activation](#)

Learn Your Brain Movements For Stress Relief



PACE



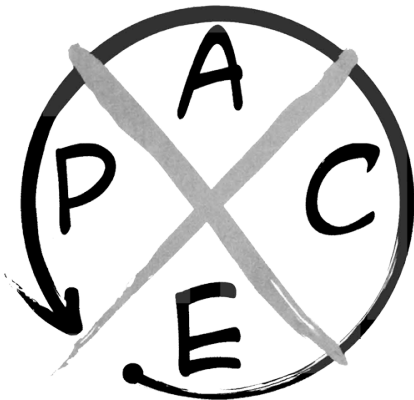
Positive Points

Use these movements
when you're feeling over-
whelmed or stressed out.



Pretzel

Learn Your Brain Movements For Test Taking



PACE



Lazy 8s

Use these movements before and during a test to calm you and to help you remember and use information.



Positive Points



Earth Buttons

Learn Your Brain Movements For Class



Pretzel



Brain Buttons



Think of an X/
Draw an X



Earth Buttons

Neck Rolls

You can use these exercises while you're in class to keep you focused and centered. Nobody will even notice!



Seated Calf Pump



Ear Rolls



Draw Lazy 8s
on paper



Positive Points

Arm Activation

How to do this exercise:

Extend your arms out in front of you to check the length of both arms. They should be the same in length.

Raise one arm above your head and reach up high as if to touch the ceiling. Next use the opposite hand to apply pressure to your raised arm in four different directions: front, back, in, and away. For each direction, hold the movement for at least 8 seconds as you gently exhale.

Repeat step 1 to check the length of your arms again. You may notice that they're now a different length.

Repeat step 2 with the other arm. Check the length of your arms. They should now be the same length again.

Activates the brain for:

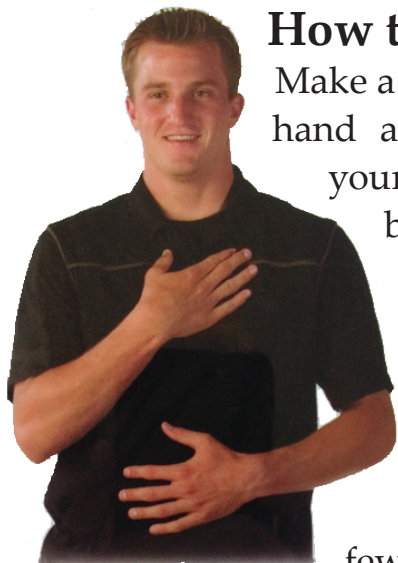
- speaking and expressing yourself easily and clearly
- eye-hand coordination and use of writing tools
- relaxing your diaphragm so you breath better

How this will help you:

- relaxes hands so typing and writing is easier
- increases attention span for written work
- increases ability to express ideas
- improves breathing which leads to a more relaxed attitude



Brain Buttons



How to do this exercise:

Make a “U” shape with the thumb and index finger of one hand and place them in the small depressions just below your collarbone and about one inch to each side of your breastbone. Rub the points at your collarbone for about 30 seconds as you move your eyes slowly to the left and right along a horizontal line. You can switch hands to activate both hemispheres.

These points may be sore at first but the soreness will go away if you continue doing them over a few days or a week. Then you can activate these points by just holding them. (A great thing to do in class when you don’t want to be obvious!)

Activates the brain for:

- using both hemispheres of your brain
- increasing oxygen to your brain

How this will help you:

- helps your eyes cross the midline and makes it easier to keep your place while reading
- improves your body coordination
- relaxes neck and shoulder muscles (especially when combined with neck roll)
- increases energy

Calf Pump

How to do this exercise:

Standing with one leg forward, lean forward by bending the front knee. You can do this unsupported or you can support yourself against a wall or chair. Keep your back leg straight and press the back heel gently to the ground to extend your leg. (Your knee extends no more than to the middle of the foot beneath it.) Exhale as you lengthen the muscles in the back leg to a count of eight. As you release, lift your back heel and take a deep breath. Do this three times on each side.



Alternative Seated Version:

While seated, extend both legs in the air out in front of you. Extend your heels out while flexing your toes in towards your legs. Hold for a count of eight.

Activates the brain for:

- getting out of survival brain (brainstem) into your thinking brain (frontal lobes)
- speaking and expressing yourself easily and clearly

How this will help you:

- improves your listening and reading comprehension
- Improves your creative writing abilities
- increases focus and concentration

Cross Crawl

How to do this exercise:

Raise your left leg and touch it with your right hand or elbow. Then raise your right leg and touch it with your left hand or elbow. This activity is most effective when you take your time and do it slowly.

Activates the brain for:

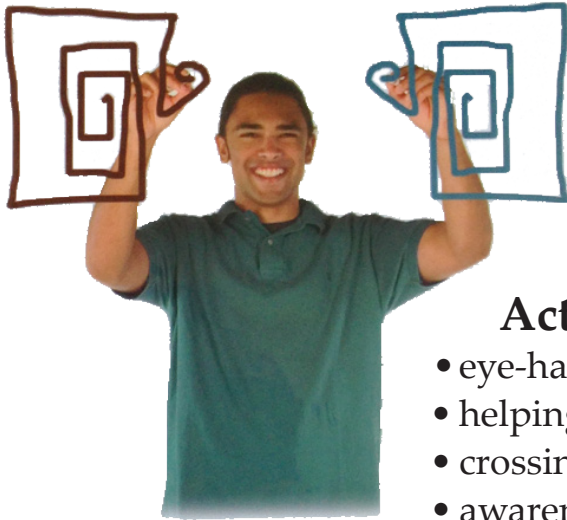
- crossing visual, auditory, kinesthetic and tactile midline.
- using both eyes together
- awareness of your body

How this will help you:

- helps with spelling and writing
- improves your listening and attention
- improves reading and comprehension
- coordinates both sides of the body for sports



Double Doodle



How to do this exercise:

Raise both hands in the air and draw mirror-image shapes in the air with your hands. Imagine that you're conducting an orchestra with both hands.

Activates the brain for:

- eye-hand coordination
- helping both eyes work together
- crossing the midline
- awareness of directional sense (right and left)
- spatial awareness

How this will help you:

- helps with writing, spelling, math
- helps with following directions
- improves peripheral vision
- improves sports abilities and movement skills

Ear Rolls

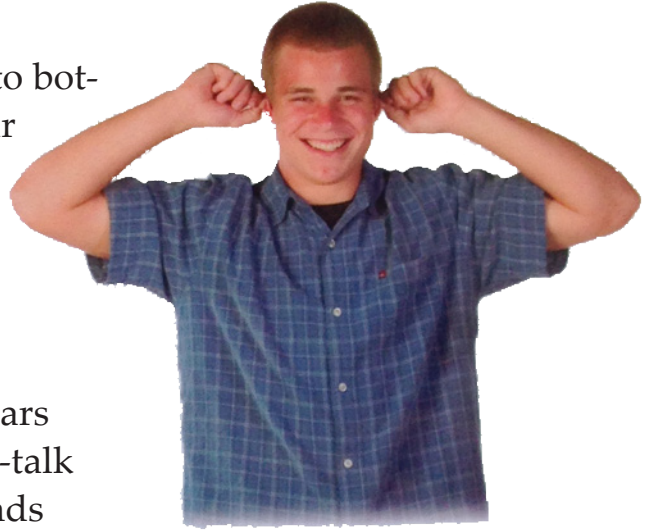
How to do this exercise:

Gently “unroll” your ears from top to bottom with both hands and tug your ears away from your head gently.

Repeat this several times.

Activates the brain for:

- listening to others with both ears
- being more aware of your self-talk
- screening out distracting sounds



How this will help you:

- helps you screen out distracting sounds and pay attention to what you need to hear
- helps you with listening comprehension
- helps your focus and pay attention

Earth Buttons

How to do this exercise:

Place two fingers between your chin and your lower lip and rest your other hand on your belly button. Imagine that you're breathing energy up the center of your body. Let your eyes track gently up and down in a vertical line, like you're tracing the line in the corner of a room from ceiling to floor and then from floor to ceiling.

Activates the brain for:

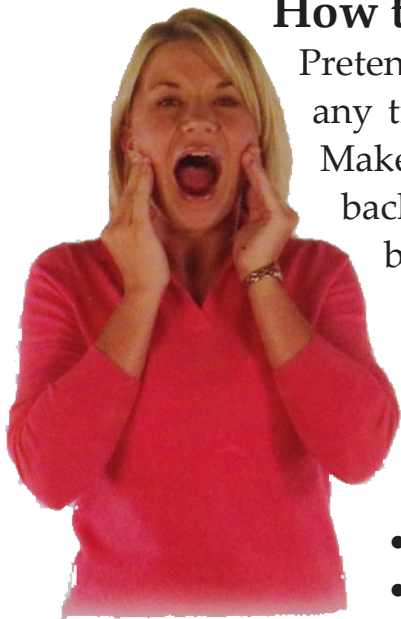
- being calm and centered
- working in the visual midfield
- looking down to do near-visual skills (writing, typing, drawing, etc.)

How this will help you:

- makes it easier to keep your place while reading
- helps you transfer information from the whiteboard/smartboard down to your notes
- relieves mental fatigue



Energy Yawn



How to do this exercise:

Pretend to yawn. Put the fingertips of each hand on any tight spots you may feel along your jaw joints. Make a deep, relaxed yawning sound, opening the back of your throat as wide as you can while rubbing the tight spots on your jaw.

Repeat three or more times or until your eyes begin to water.

Activates the brain for:

- focus and attention
- verbal and expressive communication

How this help you:

- improves creative writing
- improves expression and creativity while speaking
- relaxes your eyes and helps you think more clearly

Eye Palming

How to do this exercise:



This is a deep eye relaxation technique that also relaxes and calms your whole neurological system.

Rub your palms together for 5-10 seconds to warm them. Cover your closed eyes with your hands in such a way that there is no pressure on your eyeballs. The palms of your hands are slightly cupped over each eye (left over left and right over right), and usually the fingers are partly interlaced on your forehead.

There should be no light, or as little as possible, allowed to enter the eye. Once you are palming, open your eyes and look around to see if you can adjust your hands in such a way as to exclude as much light as possible. Close your eyes.

Do not concentrate on the eyes or area behind them. Breathe deeply. Focus just on your breathing (it helps to fully relax). Just concentrate on how you inhale, exhale, inhale, exhale...

Activates the brain for:

- eye relaxation and better vision

How this will help you:

- relieves eye fatigue and decreases stress in your entire body
- improves reading

Gravity Glider

How to do this exercise:

Sit comfortably in a chair and extend your legs in front of you. Cross your legs at the ankles and lean forward over your legs while extending your arms out in front of you. Exhale as you lean forward for at least 10 seconds.

Cross your feet the other way and repeat the process.



Activates the brain for:

- a sense of balance and coordination
- relaxation and centering
- increased visual attention
- deeper breathing and increased energy

How this will help you:

- improves reading comprehension
- helps you do mental math
- relaxes your body after you've been sitting for a long time
- helps you breathe deeper so you have more energy

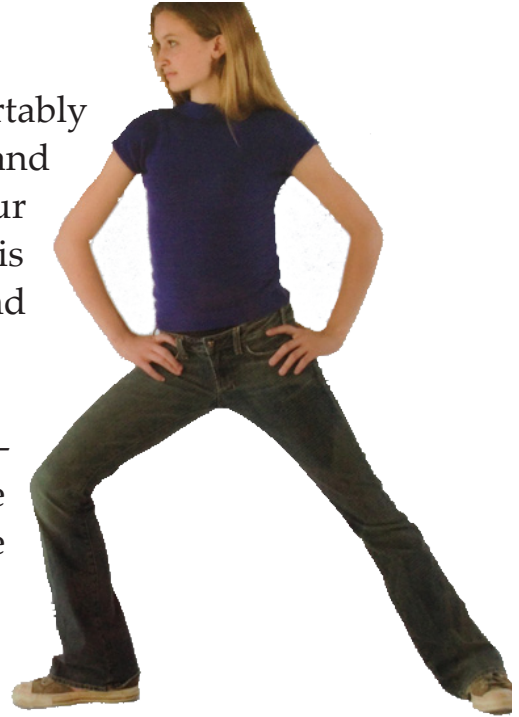
Grounder

How to do this exercise:

Stand facing forward with your legs comfortably apart, hands on your hips. Turn your head and your right foot to the right, while keeping your left foot pointed straight ahead (your torso is facing forward; your right knee, elbow, and nose are pointed to the right.)

Bend your right knee and slowly exhale, allowing your knee to extend over the middle of your right foot. You should feel a gentle stretch in your inner hip and thigh.

Repeat using the other foot.



Activates the brain for:

- centering and being relaxed
- organization
- deeper breathing
- spatial awareness
- whole-body relaxation
- relaxed vision

How this will help you:

- helps with focus and concentration
- relieves stress and increases relaxation
- increases memory for information
- increases ability to understand and organize information

Lazy 8s



How to do this exercise:

Raise one hand to eye level like you're giving a thumbs up sign to someone.

Then draw a large 8 on its side (infinity symbol) slowly in the air in front of you, going up and to the left first. Allow your eyes to track with the moving thumb.

Repeat this process with your other thumb.

Then repeat by locking your fingers together and following both thumbs at the

same time.

As an alternative to drawing it up in the air, you can pretend to draw an eight on your desk or on a table. **You can also can draw a lazy eight on your paper with a pencil or magic marker.**

Lazy eights and double doodles are helpful to do before any writing assignment.

Activates the brain for:

- crossing the visual midline of the body
- increases ability to use your eyes together so you can track smoothly while you read
- increases peripheral vision

How this will help you:

- makes reading easier and less stressful
- helps you get into the flow of writing

Neck Rolls

How to do this exercise:

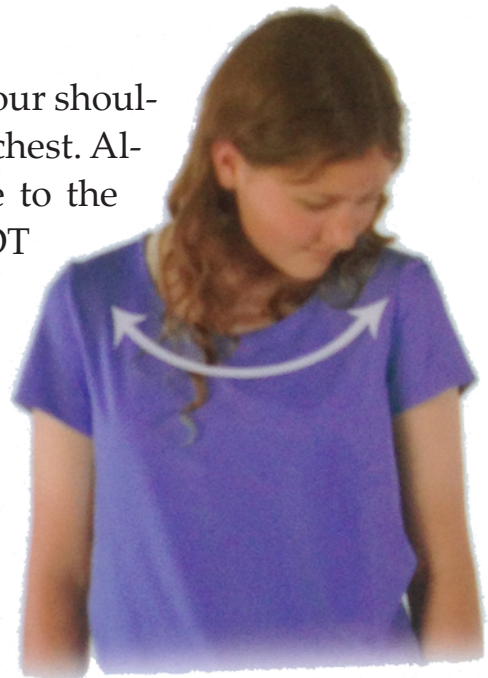
Deeply inhale and then exhale as you relax your shoulders and drop your head forward over your chest. Allow your head to roll slowly from one side to the other as you breathe out any tension. Do NOT roll your head backwards because this puts too much strain on your neck.

Activates the brain for:

- using both eyes together to read and write
- centering and relaxing

How this will help you:

- makes reading easier because it helps eyes track smoothly over visual midfield
- improves speech and language
- improves focus and concentration



Owl



How to do this exercise:

Grab the muscles at the top of one shoulder with your opposite hand and squeeze firmly, grabbing deep in the belly of the muscle (not so hard that it hurts, though). Slowly turn your head to look over that shoulder. Then exhale loudly as you turn your head to look over the opposite shoulder. Inhale as you look back over the shoulder that you're grabbing.

Repeat several times until you feel the muscles relax, then do the same for the other side.

The Owl can be combined with the Head Roll for extra relaxation.

Activates the brain for:

- short and long-term memory
- listening with both ears
- self-talk and clear thinking

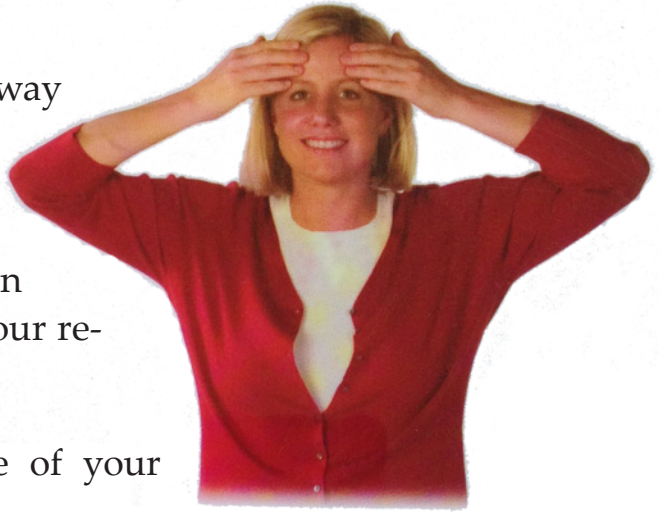
How this will help you:

- relaxes neck, jaw and shoulder muscles so you can focus better
- helps you understand verbal directions and lectures easier
- relieves stress after working on your computer
- helps you give speeches or oral reports with more ease and clarity

Positive Points

How to do this exercise:

Lightly hold the two points halfway between the hairline and the eye-brows on your forehead-just above the centers of your eyes. Use just enough pressure to pull the skin taut. Hold these points gently as your relax and breath.



Alternative: Put the palm of one of your hands gently on your forehead.

Activates the brain for:

- accessing the frontal lobes of the brain to relieve stress about specific memories, situations, people, places, and skills
- keeps you from acting without thinking when you're under stress

How this will help you:

- decreases stress
- helps with test anxiety
- increases relaxation before public speaking
- improves sports performance
- helps your organize and study with greater ease

Pretzel



How to do this exercise:

Part 1:

First cross one ankle over the other while you're sitting or standing. Then stretch your arms out with the back of your hands together and the thumbs pointing down. Now lift one hand over the other so that your palms face each other and lace your fingers together. Then roll your hands in and rest them on your chest with your elbows down. Finally, rest your tongue on the roof of your mouth behind your teeth. Breathe deeply and relax.

Part 2:

Uncross your arms and feet and gently touch your fingers together like you're making a sphere with your hands.

Activates the brain for:

- emotional calming and centering
- increased concentration and attention

How this will help you:

- releases stress and helps you feel more organized and centered
- helps you listen and speak more clearly
- helps you feel more positive and perform better on tests and in other stressful situations

Space Buttons



How to do this exercise:

Place two fingertips on the space between your upper lip and nose. Place your other hand just over your tailbone area. Imagine you're breathing energy up your spine. Let your eyes gently track in a vertical line, like you're tracing the corner of a room up and down, from ceiling to floor and vice versa.

Activates the brain for:

- centering and relaxation
- near-to-far vision
- depth perception

How this will help you:

- makes it easier to move your eyes vertically as well as horizontally (as in columns for math)
- helps you keep your place while reading
- helps with focus and concentration

Think of an X

How to do this exercise:

Close your eyes and imagine an X in your mind. You can make it look however you like by giving it any color, texture, or sound.

Alternative: If you have a loose sheet of paper in front of you, you can also draw an X on your page.

Activates the brain for:

- using both brain hemispheres
- using both eyes in the visual midfield
- listening with both ears effectively
- whole-body coordination

How this will help you:

- makes any physical skill easier
- improves your coordination for movement and sport
- makes planning and organizing easier
- increases focus and concentration



Stay in touch with us!

If you have any questions, concerns, or feedback, we'd love to hear from you. You can get in touch with us at the following e-mail addresses:



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Plus, stay connected with us on Face-



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