



From: **Who Needs Light**
Chapter 7: Feeling Like a Child.
by Kathryn E May. AuthorHouse Publishing 2011

Gazing deeply into the person's eyes, behind the surface presentation of mood and facial expression, it is possible to grasp the meanings inherent in the backdrop of long-held feelings and attitudes we might call their world-view.

Stress is in the eye of the beholder:

The developmental stresses of infancy and childhood affect not only our feeling states, but our visual circuitry. Imagine the optic nerve as it develops and grows. In the corpus collosum, the central information superhighway, the optic nerves crisscross to provide processing on each side of the brain for information originating from both eyes. ... In most of us the system is complete and functions nicely providing a technicolour 3D experience from early infancy. Throughout the years of development, the optic nerve lengthens to accommodate the brains' growth. However, for many of us, our "feel" of the centre of operations is still forward, as if our brain were still small. p. 110



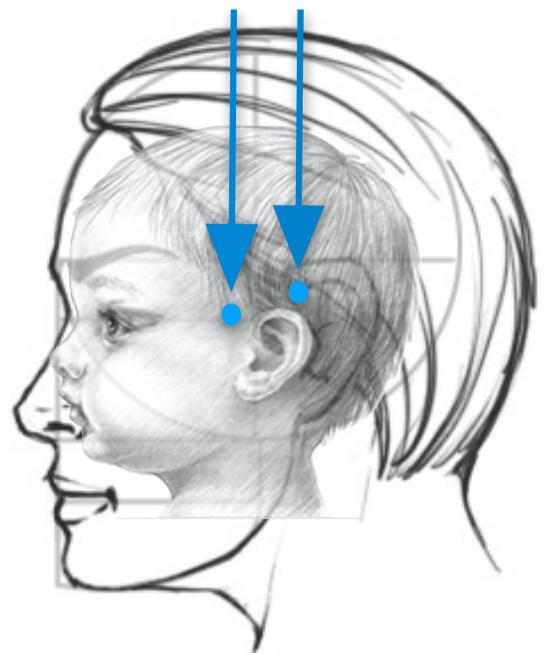
This diagram gives an approximate picture of the relationship between the child and adult brain. Notice the distance from the front of the brain where the infants eyes would be to the child centre. It is a relatively shorter distance ... than that of the adult's.

... The fear we observe in the person's eye resembles the eyes of a child, as if the adult were recreating the brain configuration of a child, with the brain centre close behind the eyes. This stance creates a feeling of being up too close, as if one were being bombarded, and everything is larger than life. This is the anxious state that infants and children feel all too often.

Note: The following discussion about visual focus and its' relationship to psychological states has not yet been documented scientifically as far as I know. It is the result of my own 35 year of training and practice. What I describe is what I see. ... p. 111

Vision is one of the first senses to fully develop. An infant at twelve weeks has nearly adult capabilities

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visually, but little of the experience or brain development to understand what she sees. However, life requires that we somehow absorb and record our experience as we go, and vision plays a major part in the recording of those experiences. Think of how many expressions we have that refer to both vision and a psychological state: “I see:” “That’s clear;” “getting something into perspective;” “having a vision” (plan); “being a seer” (wise person); “being blind to the truth” and so on.

Many children witness things they would rather not see or hear; nevertheless, the brain lays down memory traces of emotionally charged experiences deep in the nervous system. ...

We are intimately connected, body and mind. Diseases of all kinds can be linked to emotional stress. ... When the stress becomes too overwhelming, the child may learn to monkey with his vision, for his own protection. ... p.112

Children have reasons other than family abuse to find ways to not see what is in front of them. Most cultures on the planet require massive dishonesty in the simplest of social interactions such as: “Do these jeans make me look fat?” ... An innocent child could not help but be overwhelmed by the expectations that he be able to double-think every interaction in order to be liked and accepted. A child is not intellectually equipped to deal with the complexities and sensitivities of the adults they encounter. p. 112

As language begins to develop, children naturally say what they see, in a very direct and uncensored way. They have not yet developed the delay that adults have, to edit or monitor what they say for the benefit of their audience. This charming quality leads to situations which adults may find terribly embarrassing, since we have completely bought into the idea that lying is “polite” and therefore necessary. For instance, when he was three, my son sweetly asked our neighbour, “What are you so fat?” His question came out of curiosity, nothing more. He really wanted to know. Had we not been stuck on the elevator with 6 floors to go, I might have spared him the sudden flash of outrage and indignation she unleashed on him. I was able to later reassure him it wasn’t his fault, but the lesson may have lingered for him, as it did for me. I would handle it differently now, some 45 years later. Rather than sheepishly escaping, I would protect the child rather than the touchy adult. I would hold her accountable for her aggressive actions by saying something like, “Why are you so angry when a little child asks a simple question? He didn’t mean any harm. Stop frightening him.” I cannot have a do-over at this point, but perhaps my experience will resonate with other young parents.

Such upsetting social events are likely to leave a residue of fear in a young child, especially if it confirms what they experience at home. The **stop-seeing-stop thinking command** operates below consciousness. ... When your emotional radar detects a rise in disapproval or anxiety in the other person-the hint that your potential well-being might be in jeopardy-your **stop-loss** kicks in. p. 113

Quote: “Preserve a child’s vision by allowing them to see their way rather than yours.”

Jacob Liberman OD. Author of Take Your Glasses Off and See.

Once we have put these not-seeing-too-clearly patterns in place, we carry them with us into adulthood, long after the survival need to be unclear has passed. By then, it feels as if it is just who we are. This leaves us seriously compromised in our day-to-day functioning, since many of our “spontaneous” reactions are anything but that. We have

been programmed by our own experience to respond with fear and caution. We are left with the lingering shadow of long-ago pain which imposes itself, unbidden into our daily functioning. These unbidden shadows produce similar effect in all of us: They increase our fear, and reduce our ability to be creative and to love freely.

It is logical that these **“stop-loss”** blockages would register as physical blockages in our visual equipment, just as motional memories are store in the muscles and nerve our our body. ...

The traumatic incidences we see and feel in childhood are stored in an analogous way in the nerve channels of our optic system, and can be released in a similar way. Like massage we can work out the blockages by soothing and easing the nerve passages through breathing and relaxation practices directed specially toward the optical channels. The next and most crucial step, is to literally move the point of focus from the forward child position to the centre of our adult brain. p. 114

The Legacy of Amos Gunsberg

The basic understandings I use in practice are originally developed during the 1950's and 60's by Amos M. Gunsberg. M.A. The original assumption behind Gunsberg's work was this: Since vision is such an important and early brain function and such an important part of our processing of life experience, every trauma which initiates or strengthens a disintegrative or dysfunctional response (neurosis, psychosis, depression, etc.) will be registered in the neural pathways of the visual system.

Gunsberg worked out a system of exercises, which when combined with coaching-style feedback directly address the fixed focus which results from living life as if it were still childhood in one's optical circuitry. The next step, learning to focus in the centre of one's brain and to stay there as a way of life, allows a dramatic shift to optimal, reality based vision. The genius in Gunsberg's work was this - the ability to see the problem and offer a solution, by helping the person to literally change their centre of operations.

The Fabricated Self:

For those of us who are compromised in childhood, it's a matter of survival when we separate from ourselves, create a false mask, then identify with it as if it were who we are. We have more than enough reasons to want to keep the arrangement in place, except for one thing. It feels awful. Deep in our heart of hearts, we know we are not being authentic. The innocent spontaneity, passion and curiosity of infancy have given way to depression that lingers like a slow-grade infection leaving us exhausted, pessimistic and lonely, always skirting the borders of despair. The loneliness we feel is the longing to be connected with our own heart and soul, and with something beyond ourselves.

From birth to about two years old, we are completely immersed in the culture that is our own family. During those years, we absorb and digest the emotional atmosphere, value systems and attitudes that are the outward expression of our parents thinking.

In your mind, you are your parents. In your heart and in your soul-body, you are yourself.

(As a child), your own electromagnetic state of being was swamped and overtaken by another's. In clearing the channels, you restore yourself and your own ability to

perceive and adapt to reality - you become your own CEO. A computer analogy works well here. It is as if we are removing the old software program from our operating system, storing it as an old file, inactive but available in memory. Our own newly - updated operating system, driven by our own heart, soul and life energy, becomes the primary one. ...

The adult state feels like a very different brain configuration from the child one, using the highest levels of prefrontal cortex (the third eye area of the brain) In this state, the connections from brain to heart to soul to spirit and back again flow directly. This subdues and bypasses the anxious brain chatter which can start an adrenaline freak out. It is this state we are working toward in all our waking hours as well. Here, unlike childhood, our adult free will requires us to make our own choices, moment by moment and the choices we make matter. This is not "being responsible" as we generally define it. It is a deeper internal sense of own own place (and power) in the greater whole.

At ease, in the centre of your brain, anchored in your heart, you can look at other people - even the ones you had decided were your enemies from a relatively dispassionate point of view, with a certain amount of compassion for the fact that they too have probably traveled a difficult path and may be struggling with the same kinds of emotional injuries as you are.

The process of "seeing" is largely an intuitive, heart and soul-centred way of looking at another person, without judgement or analysis. It requires the seer to assume a neutral, observing stance, without ego - or self - involvement. We look deeply for a moment of acceptance, recognition and acknowledgement of a shared human experience.

As you begin to observe and modify your own visual settings, you will become more aware of the record of life experiences you can see in the eyes of others. As an adult, you will no longer be admonished for looking, or devastated to the truth of what you see. But be prepared to observe a preponderance of people who show deep levels of fear, sadness, or thinly veiled rage: the recorded history of trauma, pain and disappointment they 'wear' in their nervous systems, mostly from childhood struggles.

If you are willing, when you look into the mirror, you will see it in your (own eyes).

There are at least 3 levels of functioning we can observe in the eyes:

1. The surface presentation
2. The persons' conscious attitudes and feelings about their presentation and the effect it is having on you, and
3. Where they're common from (their fundamental sense of their place in the world, including the spiritual connections)

Left Brain (Right Eye Dominance)

In his book, The Neuroscience of Psychotherapy, Louis Cozolino has described this process as left-brain reasoning faculties taking precedence and control over right-brain processes. This does not allow expression of authentic feeling, intuition and the acknowledgment of one's own needs. Further, it creates an unconscious division within the neurological channels of the brain, which are then layered over with conscious justifications and rationalizations.

In lay terms, as we practise the not-seeing/not knowing strategies which are required of us in childhood, we create the structures in our brains to accommodate these needs. One experience at a time, we lay down the tracks for keeping it secret from ourselves that we have just pretended we don't know something. ... We create the barrier and the conscious justification layered over it to suppress and hide from ourselves and the world what is truly, authentically closest to our hearts. ... A strategy which would probably be unnecessary in an environment where the child's deepest feelings, need and aspirations were simply acknowledged and taken in stride by the adults around him.

Self-hatred is the natural accompaniment to pretending to be different from who you actually are. The self-hatred we practise is hatred of what is deeply authentic and creative in ourselves.

There are examples of enlightened spiritual leaders in every generation, but our history books are replete with tragic stories of how original thinkers have been met with scorn, resentment and even death for their real contributions to the human endeavour. With this psychological and cultural background, it is little wonder we find ourselves divided against our true nature and show it in our behaviour toward the world at large. Thus, the conflict between the child true self and his world becomes the reason for such (seeing strategies) ... and the way we use our eyes.

(From my personal experience and that working with clients, glasses help to engrain and continue the stop-seeing-stop-thinking-stop loss programming as described by Kathryn May. By keeping our brain focus on external clarity, and in a forward child like position in the frontal cortex, glasses create a 'static' that interrupts eye teaming, bilateral brain function and the ability to access our third eye.) Summer Bozohora

