

## COMMENTS ON A NEW PHILOSOPHY OF VISION

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Recent investigation has shown that vision is a vast, complex network which opens up a new avenue of research towards the improvement of Human Mechanics. Vision is a psychophysiological mechanism associated with the sense of sight<sup>1</sup>. It is concerned with the mental interpretation of retinal images. Both of these factors can exist independently. Therefore, the individual could have normal retinal images, but have no sight because of brain damage of the visual area; the individual could also be hysterically blind because imagination has created a situation whereby the visual area of the brain does not function properly. Eidetic vision and visual memory also makes it possible for the individual to perceive images in varying degrees of clearness, with his eyes closed<sup>2</sup>. Recent investigation indicates that we "see" with the mind. Aristotle went as far as to observe that an individual's soul is destroyed with the loss of vision<sup>3</sup>. It took science about 2500 years to discover the meaning of this philosophical statement. However, the fitting together of many research projects makes the picture more clear when:

- <sup>1</sup> Arnold Gesell, M.D. (Director of the Gesell Institute) stated that vision and intelligence are different phases of the same mechanism<sup>4</sup>.
- <sup>2</sup> Smiley Blanton, M.D. (Director of the Religio Psychiatric Clinic assisting Dr. Norman Vicent Peale) assumed that the mind is the organ of intelligence and the soul<sup>5</sup>.
- <sup>3</sup> Stratton C. Murrell, B.S., O.D. (President Multiple Research and Development, Inc.) tied all of these ideas together into a new philosophy of vision whereby the eyes are a projection of the brain rather than a connection via the optic nerve. Therefore, a certain amount of intelligence and/or the soul is destroyed with the loss of vision (imagination, hope, and perception)<sup>6</sup>.

Most specialists now refer to 20/20 vision as the desirable standard to be attained, whereas all modern research reveals something quite different. Twenty-twenty isn't vision at all, but is a small part of the visual mechanism which includes peripheral vision, color vision, accommodation, convergence, and other skills<sup>7</sup>. It would also include the individual personality.

Personality and all of its achievements are dependent upon the development of a self-image<sup>5</sup>. This self-image is dependent upon visualization of (or imagination which is the formation of mental images). Visualization is a part of visual therapy which includes several different methods to promote single, simultaneous, binocular vision. Through this process, a success pattern can be established and attitudes can be improved. This has been done with remarkable results with a research group of the Onslow Project at the Jacksonville Junior High School. This group attended a summer remedial school and visual therapy was used in addition to the usual scholastic instruction to improve attitudes and grades.

As a result of this preliminary research more positive results can be achieved by refining this method and applying it in education and mental health. Even though times have changed there is still resistance to mental treatment as it is to a lesser degree with physical treatment. Psychiatrists are perhaps more concerned than any other specialists in the medical profession with words, their meaning, and their effect upon the patient<sup>9</sup>. There are several obvious reasons for this concern. People who need "psychiatric treatment" do not seek it because of the social stigma involved. The response is somewhat better with "mental health" and the attitude that a person attends a "mental health clinic" to prevent a mental disease rather than being treated for one. All mental disease utilizes the imagination to manipulate the ego or self-image. This mechanism operates through vision. Visual Therapy is a new approach to the control of visual imagery. It is easy to explain and the patient will find it much more acceptable than the usual mental health approach.

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