

FRIENDS OF NEUROVISUAL TRAINING NEWSLETTER. ISSUE 1, VOLUME 1.

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Introduction.

The friends of neurovisual training newsletter is a place where we can share ideas, update on the latest methods, discuss paper or research, and expand our knowledge in this space. While we will be emailing out a small news letter as content and time allows, we'll also be posting on facebook and twitter. @FriendsOfNVT and Friends of NeuroVisual Training on facebook.

Our goal is to have a presence and voice on what we are doing and to be a resource to share thoughts and ideas. Anyone can propose a subject to discuss, an article to write or content to post. We'll keep the emails to a manageable level and try to have a good time.

We would like this to be informative and interactive. So please participate and communicate.

Introduction to our brand of NeuroVisual Training.

We characterize NeuroVisual Training (NVT) as a process of eye and brain training with a goal to improve both and to improve the coordination between the eyes and the brain. NVT can be used as a means to improve athletic performance, academic performance, tactical abilities as well as rehabilitation post injury. NVT can be divided up into 3 main categories, which we call the three pillars of NVT. Pillar 1 involves training proper eye movement. Pillar 2 involves training eye discipline. Pillar 3 involves training the brain to process information from the eyes and other senses.

To follow we expand on the three pillars and why they are significant components of our NVT programs. Pillar 1, eye movement, is when we train the eyes to track or move in a controlled and appropriate way. This could be to track and object, to scan a field, to take a quick peak, or follow objects coming / going out. The speed and precision to make these movements can be critical in numerous tasks. Take for example eye movement for a quick peak. If you are a race car driver and you want to check your mirrors you want to do that quickly so you're eyes are not away from the track in front of you. Pillar 1 training helps improve the ability to do the movements quickly and efficiently with minimum time away from the track. Similar pillar 1 benefits can be found in field sports where a person may need to scan a field, or take their eyes from ball to adversary quickly.

Pillar 2, eye discipline, represents keeping the eyes on a target when needed. The brain needs good visual information and sometimes that information needs to be a continuous stream of consistent information and sometimes the eyes need to move to avoid saturation of the light signal to the retina. Keeping the eyes where they need to be is a discipline hence our term, eye discipline. An appreciation of the importance of eye discipline can be found with athletes like boxers or combat sports practitioners such as the MMA. MMA coaches will frequently tell their fighter to keep their eyes on their adversary's eyes. They get information on head movement or eye movement that can be tells on what the other fighter might be planning. Some combat sports fighters have a bad habit of looking where they are going to hit. This telegraphs the attack and can impact performance. So eye discipline, where you do not telegraph your intentions, can be an aid to performance enhancement.

Pillar 3, brain training, involves training the brain to take in and use information. Consider the example of the racecar driver in Pillar 1. What would happen to that person if they trained the eyes to move quickly to the mirrors but the brain was slowing things down by needing to dwell on the mirror to take in information? The training would be limited by the brain's weakness in this case. Pillar 3 training to train the brain to go faster and take in information better is somewhat obvious in this example and is a hallmark of how working the 3 pillars of NVT will make the NVT training more effective. We referenced above the ability of NVT to improve academic performance. We've had numerous anecdotal reports where students doing our vision training find certain aspects of classroom work easier. A common example is that students report that they are able to get more information off of the slides the professors use in class. Students would say that prior to NVT they would need more time to get information off on an educational slide; the slide going too soon. Whereas with NVT they get the information faster. We have specific drills we use for this type of training that helps the brain take in visual information better and faster; and such anecdotes reinforce this concept.

Sadly, Neurovisual training (NVT) often gets bundled into vision training. Vision training is generally considered a tool of Optometrists and Ophthalmologists to treat kids and adults with "weak eye" or some similar malady. This type of vision training has tremendous utility in those patients, but it is only a tiny component of NVT. NVT makes the eyes and brain work better and faster. We apply our NVT program to athletes for performance enhancement and with patients for rehab.

As with a lot of things, the devil is in the details. Attention to detail is needed to do NVT such that time and productivity is maximized. NVT is a process that takes time to learn the skills, know how to advance and progress the skills and training and a philosophy of separation where the person being trained will grow and become independent; needing the trainer less and less.

Announcements.

An article in Journal of Sports and Performance Vision that reviews some of the NVT methods we utilize came out earlier this year.
<http://jsapv.com/index.php/JOVP/article/view/4/4>. Have a look. Feel free to ask questions about what we discuss in it.

Disclaimer. Nothing in this communication should be construed as a practice of medicine, an endorsement or political action. The opinions are the opinions of the authors.