

Eye Movement Integration

**applied with a Vietnam Veteran
who had been experiencing
intrusive memories.**

Steve Andreas

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This booklet is designed to accompany the DVD
Eye Movement Integration, a complete 50-minute
live demonstration of this method, conducted by Steve
Andreas. This DVD can be ordered:

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EYE MOVEMENT INTEGRATION

A method developed by Connirae and Steve Andreas

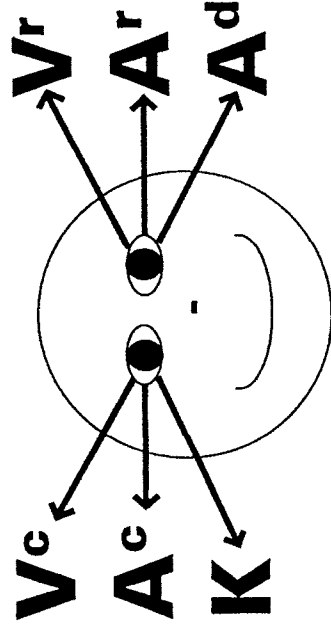
A. Introduction

This method is a direct application of the NLP eye movement accessing cues that were described by Richard Bandler and John Grinder in 1979 . These eye movement accessing cues were a refinement and further specification of phenomena described by "lateral eye movement" research in the 1960s and 1970s. This research, together with the split-brain research pioneered by Richard Sperry and his colleagues at Caltech, became the basis for the simplistic left-brain/right-brain descriptions of mental functioning.

The basic idea underlying eye accessing cues is that eye movements indicate the different parts of the brain (and different processing functions) being activated at a moment in time. The chart below, and the descriptions of the cues are taken from Appendix I from *Trance-formations* by Richard Bandler and John Grinder:

Eye Accessing Cues

While most people lump all of their internal information processing together and call it "thinking," Bandler and Grinder have noted that it can be very useful to divide thinking into the different sensory modalities in which it occurs. When we process information internally, we can do it visually, auditorily, kinesthetically, olfactorily, or gustatorily. As you read the word "circus," you may know what it means by seeing images of circus rings, elephants, or trapeze artists; by hearing carnival music; by feeling excited; or by smelling and tasting popcorn or cotton candy. It is possible to access the meaning of a word in any one, or any combination, of the five sensory channels.



Bandler and Grinder have observed that people move their eyes in systematic directions, depending upon the kind of thinking they are doing. These movements are called eye accessing cues. The chart (left) indicates the kind of processing most people do when moving their eyes in a particular direction. A small percentage of individuals are "reversed," that is, they move their eyes in a mirror image of this chart. Eye accessing cues are discussed in Chapter 1 of *Frogs into Princes*, and an in-depth discussion of how this information can be used appears in *Neuro-Linguistic Programming, Volume I*.

This chart is easiest to use if you simply superimpose it over someone's face, so that as you see her looking in a particular direction you can also visualize the label for that eye accessing cue.

Vr *Visual remembered:* seeing images of things seen before, in the way they were seen before. Sample questions that usually elicit this kind of processing include: "What color are your mother's eyes?" "What does your coat look like?"

Vc *Visual constructed:* seeing images of things never seen before, or seeing things differently than they were seen before. Questions that usually elicit this kind of processing include: "What would an orange hippopotamus with purple spots look like?" "What would you look like from the other side of the room?"

Ar *Auditory remembered:* remembering sounds heard before. Questions that usually elicit this kind of processing include: "What's the last thing I said?" "What does your alarm clock sound like?"

Ac *Auditory constructed:* hearing sounds not heard before. Questions that tend to elicit this kind of processing include: "What would the sound of clapping turning into the sound of birds singing sound like?" "What would your name sound like backwards?"

Ad *Auditory digital:* Talking to oneself. Questions that tend to elicit this kind of processing include: "Say something to yourself that you often say to yourself." "Recite the Pledge of Allegiance."

K *Kinesthetic:* Feeling emotions, tactile sensations (sense of touch), or proprioceptive feelings (feelings of muscle movement). Questions to elicit this kind of processing include: "What does it feel like to be happy?" "What is the feeling of touching a pine cone?" "What does it feel like to run?"

Using Accessing Cues

Eye accessing cues are not only indicators of brain processing; they are the means by which these brain functions are activated. By deliberately moving the eyes in specific directions, one can alter the way a subject's brain processes a given piece of content. This can be done with verbal instruction, non-verbal direction using hand gestures, or any other means to alter eye direction.

Two very simplified examples of NLP utilization of eye accessing cues illustrate the kinds of therapeutic benefit they make possible:

1. Spelling requires access to visual remembered images of words seen before. Many bad spellers attempt to spell using constructed visual images, or auditory memory, as indicated by their eye movements. By asking a subject to look up and left when spelling, the client has access to visual remembered images that enable them to spell correctly.
2. People with phobias typically access visual remembered images of traumatic incidents, and then feel terrible. By asking them to look up to their right, they can access constructed visual images that permit them to view traumatic scenes comfortably from a dissociated perspective, as if the events were happening to someone else at a distance.

Most processing actually utilizes sequences of different kinds of brain processing. For example, when deciding which food to order at a restaurant, a person reads the words describing a menu item, and then might visualize the food described, talk to themselves internally about it, and then imagine tasting it and have a kinesthetic feeling of how much that possible choice pleases them. Another person might talk to themselves about the choice before visualizing and tasting, while another might visualize the food and then imagine tasting and the kinesthetic pleasure that provides and then talk to themselves about it. Each of these different sequences will bias the kinds of choices the person makes. Most people use only one characteristic sequence like the ones briefly described above, and this restricts their choice in systematic ways. The same is true of all our mental processing. Eye accessing cues can be used to give clients a wider range of processing modes and sequences, than they spontaneously use.

The chart provided earlier is only a crude indicator of basic general categories of different processing. We assume that every point in the visual field corresponds to a somewhat different mode of brain processing. For more complete descriptions of the methods briefly summarized above, see Chapters 2 and 7 of *Heart of the Mind*.

Try to have the background behind you as uncluttered as possible, to make it easy for the client to see the target and to avoid distraction.

If the client wears glasses, remove them for this process. It is not necessary for the client to see clearly, as long as the target is visible enough to follow.

Begin each linkage by moving your hand relatively slowly, to make the target easy to track smoothly. Later speed up somewhat, to about one second per sweep. End linkage smoothly, moving the target toward yourself.

Notice when the client's eyes seem to "jump" past a particular area. When this happens, either:

- a. slow down temporarily, until the client can smoothly follow along through this area, or
- b. make small circles in this area, as if you were polishing a spot, and then return to the linkage you were making.

Some variation in your linkage movements is beneficial because this will integrate a wider area than an exactly-repeated sweep would.

You can also try a variety of loops:

- a. circle or ellipse (clockwise; counter-clockwise)
- b. figure eight (clockwise right; clockwise left)
- c. spiral (clockwise, counterclockwise) (starting outside; starting inside)

Often the client will find that a circle or ellipse in one direction is more comfortable than the other direction. Do the more comfortable direction first, and the less comfortable one later.

Bring all resources into the area of maximum discomfort identified at beginning ("arc in"). Allow this area to link out to all resources ("flower out").

Ask client (with cooperation of unconscious mind) to suggest possible three-point linkages that might be useful, or any other linkages that client would like to repeat.

D. Instructions to the Client

The method you are about to experience is very simple.

First, I will ask you to think of a problem or limitation and notice how you experience it.

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In Eye Movement Integration the client is asked to hold a representation of the problem content in his/her mind while visually following a moving target. The therapist moves the target repetitively, "linking" together different areas of the visual field, and the brain processing capabilities they stimulate. When the client's brain finds an alternate processing mode that is helpful, it adopts it, as indicated by spontaneous perceptual and bodily shifts in the direction of more comfortable responses to the problem content.

B. General Comments

The overall outcome of the method is:

1. To bring all the client's neurological resources to bear on the chosen problem/limitation by linking all areas in the visual field, and
2. To do this in the most comfortable way, encouraging the client to offer suggestions that will make the process more comfortable, and to immediately report any discomfort so that you can change the distance, speed, sequence, etc.

Different people will respond more to different linkages. There does not seem to be a sequence effect. If you start with circles and figure-eights instead of two-point linkages (rather than the other way around), some of the later linkages will be just as impactful.

This process is most dependably effective for unpleasant memories, including intensely traumatic ones, and for future representations, including planning, uncertainty, or anxiety. It has also frequently been useful for headaches and other physical complaints. However, it can also be useful for other types of limitations. Since the process is so simple and rapid, you are encouraged to try it with a variety of complaints to find out to what extent it is useful.

There are clearly times when other outcomes ("secondary gain") will prevent this process from completely resolving a limitation. At these times, Six-Step Reframing, Core Transformation, or some other kind of NLP internal negotiation process is indicated.

C. Guidelines and Criteria for Effective Linkage

Use a bright yellow felt tip pen as a target. Hold it so that only the tip is visible, for ease in tracking.

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E. Client Worksheet

Then, while you continue to think of this problem, I will ask you to keep your head in one position as you smoothly follow the movement of the target in my hand with your eyes. You don't have to do anything else.

After following the target with your eyes for about 20 seconds, I will pause and ask you to tell me about any changes in how you experience the problem you are thinking of.

1. Most people will have an unpleasant feeling in response to thinking about the problem limitation. Using "100%" to rate the intensity of this feeling at the beginning, "80%" would mean that it decreased 20%; "120%" would mean that the intensity increased 20%. Or there might be no change.

2. There may also be qualitative changes. These could include:

- a. perceptual changes in the way you think of the problem--for instance, your internal image could gain or lose color, or become smaller or larger, a voice or sound might increase or decrease in volume, or change in tone, etc.
- b. changes in the content of the problem--for instance the person or event in the image might change, or the words that a voice says might change, etc.
- c. changes in the kind of feeling response to thinking about the problem--from fear to comfort, anger, or excitement, for instance.
- d. changes in muscle tension or relaxation in all, or any part, of your body.

IMPORTANT

Please let me know what I can do to make this as comfortable and easy as possible for you. If you'd like me to slow down or speed up, to hold the target farther away from your face or closer to you, to pause or stop at any time, or do more of a particular movement, or have any other suggestions, please let me know right away.

If at any time during this process you experience any discomfort, reluctance, or objections, please let me know immediately, so that we can stop and modify what we are doing.

1. Briefly describe the kind of problem the client has chosen to work with: (unpleasant memory, present mood, headache or other physical symptom, anger, grief, etc.) _____

2. Predominant submodalities of client's experience of this problem state:

Visual _____

Auditory _____

Kinesthetic _____

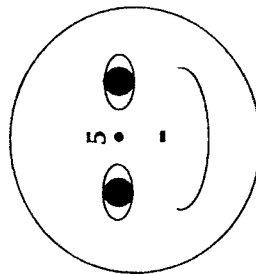
3. Which accessing position(s) is (are) least resourceful, (if any)? (Circle numbers on the chart below.)

4. Begin by linking the points that are farthest from the least

1 • 2 • 3 •

4 • 5 • 6 •

7 • 8 • 9 •



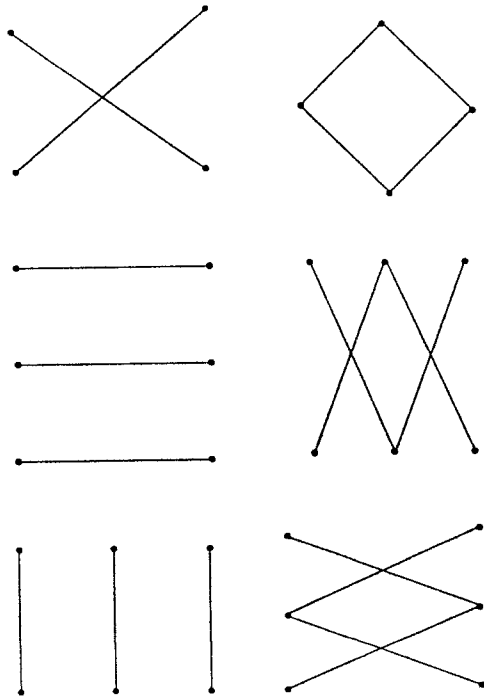
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resourceful areas noted above. You can make notes with a checkmark (or number) on the diagrams below to help keep track of which linkages you have made, and what impact they had on the limitation.

Important:

If at any time the client becomes dizzy, nauseous, or otherwise uncomfortable, stop this linkage and move on to another. When you return to this linkage later, it will usually be much less unpleasant. It is very important to integrate these areas, and it will be much more comfortable after you have already integrated other resources. Continue until all sweeps have been made to "plateau" (no further change in response to more movements), or until client is satisfied with the resulting changes.

The diagram below includes all the possible sweeps only as a help for you to check off the areas that you have done and to note any particularly useful ones, etc.



Other Resources

1. "The Aligned Self," CD set, by Connirae Andreas. Connirae teaches Eye Movement Integration as a half day of this 4-day training, which also includes the Core Transformation and Aligning Perceptual Positions processes. Because this is an audio set, the most valuable part will be the framing and discussion pointers. To understand the demonstration, you'll need the DVD. NLP Comprehensive:
<http://shop.nlpco.com/s.nl?partner=rpp>

2. *Eye Movement Integration Therapy: the comprehensive clinical guide*, by Danie Beaulieu. Written for professionals, this book contains complete and extensive instruction, information and research about this method. Crown House Publishing, Ltd. 500 pp., 2003. Available in Canada from: Impact Academy, 1020 B boul. du Lac, Lac-Beauport, Qc, Canada G3B 0W8 www.academieimpact.com