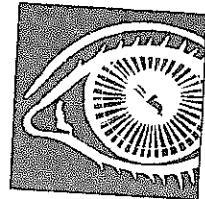


10

RELAXED EYESIGHT

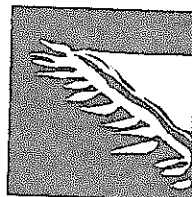
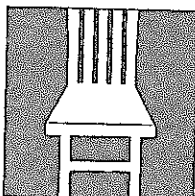


Joanne P., a twenty-seven-year-old executive secretary in a multinational corporation, sat at a desk answering phone calls and typing reports for eight to ten hours each day. Referred to us by her physical therapist, she complained of headaches, eyestrain, and shoulder and back pain. Relaxercise exercises helped Joanne to change the way she used her body while working. As she learned to relax her eyesight and improve her sitting posture, Joanne's symptoms began to disappear.

We depend on sight more than any other sense to supply us with information about the world around us. In order to maintain healthy eyesight, our eyes need to use their entire range of vision, from close up to far in the distance. But in today's world, we spend most of our time focusing on objects close to us. For example, we use *near vision* while reading, watching television, scanning computer monitors, and working with machines. The predominant use of near vision is one of the primary causes of chronic eyestrain and of tension in the neck, shoulders, and back.

Seeing involves an intricate coordination between your eyes, brain, and body. This unique exercise will help you to use your eyes in a more relaxed way. Your quality of vision will improve, and you will learn how to reduce eyestrain. Because there is a close neuromuscular relationship between your eyes and the rest of your body, you will find that as your vision becomes more relaxed, tension will disappear from your face, neck, and shoulders.

RELAXED EYESIGHT



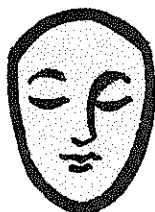
You will need either a comfortable chair or seat, or an exercise mat or rug.

Use the Relaxercise Keys

- Go slowly.
- Make each movement small and easy.
- Relax as much as you can.
- Rest briefly after each movement.

THERE ARE TWO WAYS TO DO THIS EXERCISE:

1. Read each movement instruction and then close your eyes while doing the movement.
2. Have a friend read the exercise aloud.



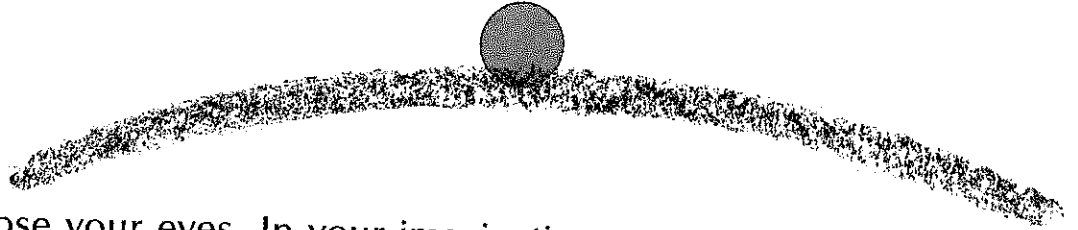
Note: If you wear contact lenses or glasses, remove them before you begin.

STARTING POSITIONS

Seated Sit on a comfortable chair or seat. Rest your hands on your thighs. Rest your feet flat on the floor, shoulder width apart, directly below your knees.

Lying down Lie flat on your back and rest your arms alongside your body. Either stretch out your legs, or bend your knees and place your feet flat on the floor, shoulder width apart, directly below your knees.

pause to rest after every few movements



Close your eyes. In your imagination, pretend you are looking at a round ball which is sitting on a distant horizon line straight ahead. In your imagination, choose the ball's color and size.

1

Imagine the ball moving very slowly to the right a little and then to the left a little along the distant horizon. Close your eyes and move them slowly from side to side, as you follow the ball in your imagination.



- Don't strain your eyes.
- Move your eyes very slowly.
- Make each movement small and easy.
- Breathe freely.
- Your eyes will probably move unevenly at some points. The ball may seem to skip suddenly, or you may lose sight of the ball from time to time.

repeat each movement 4 to 8 times

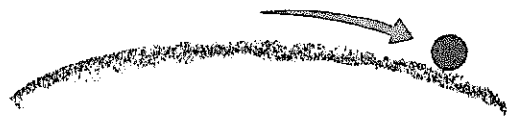
relax your neck, back, stomach and legs

2

Now pay attention to your right eye only. Imagine the ball moving slowly a little to the right, and then back to the middle, along the distant horizon line. Close your eyes and, in your imagination, let your right eye follow the ball.



- Pay attention to your right eye only.
- Make the movement small, relaxed, and comfortable.
- Do not strain your right eye by looking too far to the right.
- If the movement of your right eye is uneven at some points, slow down.
- Relax your face, neck, and shoulders.

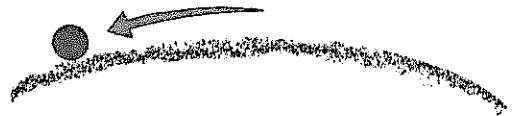


3

Pay attention to your right eye only. Imagine the ball moving slowly a little to the left, and then back to the middle, along the distant horizon. Close your eyes and follow the ball with your right eye.



- Use as little effort as possible.
- Do your eyes seem to lose sight of the ball, or does the ball skip at some points? To make the ball move smoothly, go more slowly.



breathe freely

pause to rest after every few movements



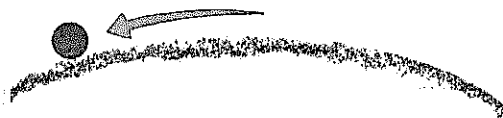
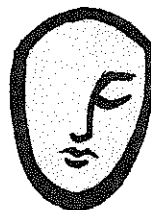
Rest and relax your eyes.

- Feel the difference between your right eye and your left eye!

4

Pay attention to your left eye only. Imagine the ball moving slowly a little to the left, and then back to the middle, along the distant horizon. Close your eyes and follow the ball with your left eye.

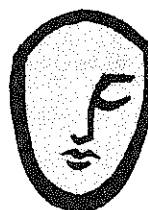
- Make this a slight, comfortable movement.
- Relax your jaw and forehead.
- Don't strain your left eye. The movement will improve automatically.



5

Pay attention to your left eye only. Imagine the ball moving slowly a little to the right, and then back to the middle, along the distant horizon. Close your eyes and follow the ball with your left eye.

- Go very slowly.
- Relax your left eye as much as possible.

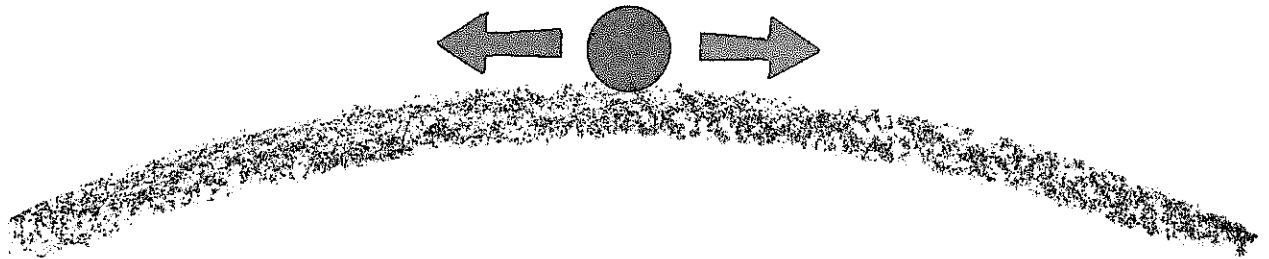


relax your eyes and take your time

use as little muscular effort as possible

6

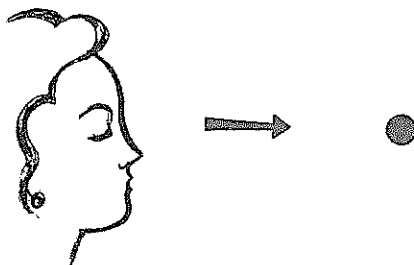
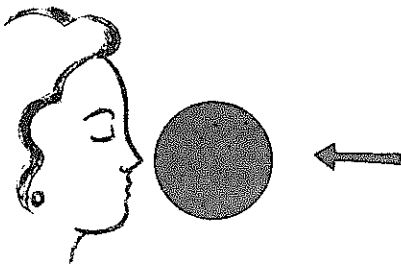
Imagine the ball moving slowly to the left a little, and then to the right a little, along the distant horizon. Close your eyes and follow the ball with both eyes.



- Are your eyes moving more smoothly now?

7

Imagine that the ball and horizon are very far away. Follow the ball in your imagination as it begins to move slowly closer and closer, gradually getting larger, until it stops just a few feet away from your face. Then imagine the ball going away again, slowly getting smaller and smaller as it returns to the distant horizon. Pause to rest when the ball reaches the horizon.



- Notice how at some distances, it is easy to imagine the ball clearly, but at other distances, the ball appears to jump or go out of focus. Going slowly will help the ball stay in focus.

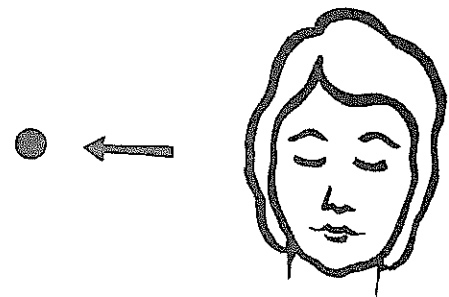
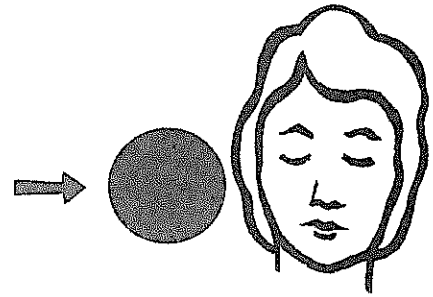
pause to rest after every few movements

breathe freely

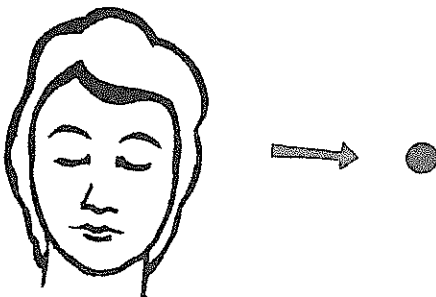
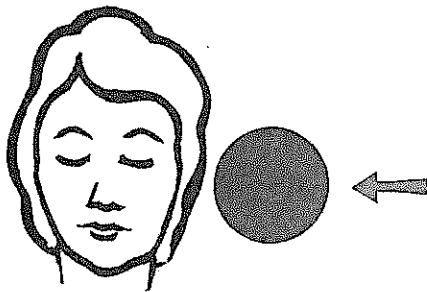
8

Imagine the ball moving along the horizon to the right, and then imagine it stopping at the far right side. Then follow the ball in your imagination as it slowly comes closer and closer, getting larger and larger, until it softly touches the right side of your face. Then imagine the ball slowly becoming smaller as it returns to the far right side of the distant horizon.

- Don't strain your eyes. Make the movement relaxed and easy.
- Use as little effort as possible.
- Imagine the ball stopping at various points along the way so you can develop a clearer focus.



9



Imagine the ball moving along the distant horizon to the left. Imagine the ball stopping on the far left side of the horizon. Then watch the ball in your imagination as it slowly comes closer and closer, getting larger and larger, until it softly touches the left side of your face. Then imagine the ball slowly becoming smaller as it returns to the left side of the distant horizon.

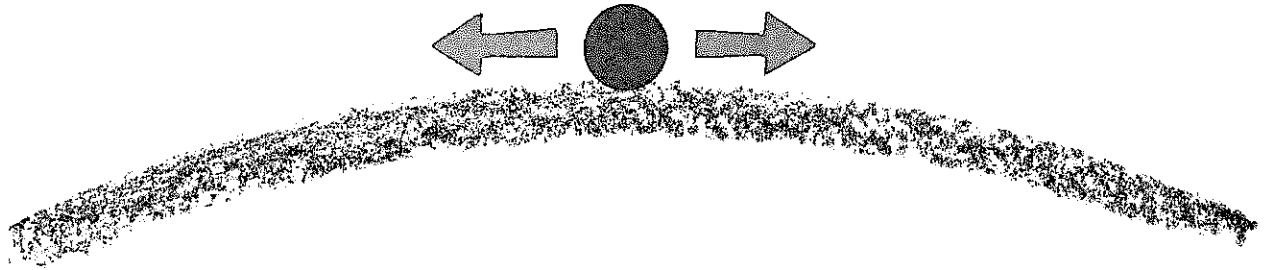
- Relax your eyes, face, neck, and shoulders as much as possible.
- Imagine the ball stopping at various points along the way so you can develop a clearer focus.

feel the difference! and then continue . . .

relax your entire body as much as possible

10

With your eyes closed, slowly look to the right and to the left a few times.



- Notice that the movement of your eyes has become much smoother and easier!
- Notice how much farther to the right and left you can move your eyes without strain.



And now, open your eyes.

- Notice how your eyes feel calm and rested.
- Notice how clear your vision is.
- Notice that your face and neck feel more relaxed, too!

You have completed “**Relaxed Eyesight.**” When you stand up and walk around, feel the relaxation of your entire body.

Enjoy the improvement!

EYE CARE TIPS

The following suggestions can help you maintain healthy, relaxed vision:

- Use your eyes' full range of motion: left, right, up, down, near and far.
- If your work involves the use of near vision, periodically rest your eyes by closing them for at *least* a moment or two every hour.
- When you need to use near vision for long periods of time, shift your gaze out a window or around the room every so often.
- Your office or work area should be well lit, without glare or shadows.
- When working at a desk, try using a book or copy holder to reduce the tendency to lean forward while reading.
- If your work involves the use of a computer video display terminal (VDT), read the VDT eye care information in the "Ergonomic Tips" chapter.
- Practice relaxed eyesight by eliminating unnecessary muscular effort and tension from your vision.

