

Improving visual fitness, heal your vision naturally

by Esther Joy van der Werf

www.visionsofjoy.org



My eyesight was perfect when I was a child; yet during my first year of Business College the clarity mysteriously left my ocean-blue eyes and a slight haze covered all distant objects. From then on I squinted to read TV subtitles and stared at scenic views to try see details others pointed out. I had no clue why my vision changed, nor did anyone ask me to ponder this. Instead I was taken to an eye doctor and soon owned a pair of metal-rimmed glasses for mild myopia.

I didn't particularly like these glasses. They did not create 'the intelligent look' I had hoped for. They actually seemed like a barrier; giving me the impression of being a mere observer of the world rather than a participant. More of an obstacle than a help, I cunningly 'lost' the glasses, never to be found.

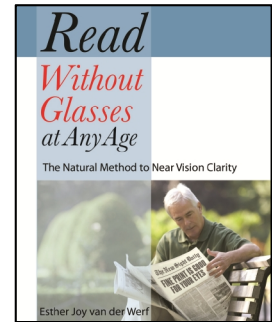
I tried eye-exercises I learned from a book, but did not have enough discipline to stick with it for long, nor did I notice any improvement. I became used to my 'soft-focus' and accepted it would always be that way. Yet life brings unexpected changes. For me, reading books on diet and health created the proverbial 'eye-opening' experience, causing a major change of direction. I left my highly-paid NATO job in Europe and began traveling, in search for something more healthful to do. At an expo in California I spotted a dauntingly heavy book titled *Relearning to See*. I was highly skeptical of its premise due to my previous failed attempt with eye exercises, yet the author told me his book was not about eye exercises but about 'the Bates Method.' He explained that muscles around the eyes can become chronically tense, and that releasing eyestrain leads to better vision. That intrigued me. Although I was not expecting actual improvement, I wondered if perhaps I could avoid worse vision. If I could remain at my slightly blurry 20/50 acuity I could avoid glasses for the rest of my life. That was sufficient motivation to buy the big book.

Months later I actually read it. I lived in Costa Rica at that time, a country well known for its natural beauty. To my amazement and delight, this natural beauty increased as my sight improved by following the suggestions outlined in *Relearning to See*. The abundant flowers became even more colorful, and within two weeks my acuity improved to 20/20. This Bates Method actually worked! I was thrilled with my renewed vision and grateful that it did not involve boring eye exercises.

Due to these rapid results I asked my friend Ted to join me in an eyesight experiment. Ted was much more nearsighted than I was; he used glasses all day for everything but reading small print. I challenged him to go without his glasses for a trial period of one week. He hesitantly agreed, and I hid his glasses to ensure he wouldn't cheat. With an eye-chart we checked his sight. I was astonished – he could not even read the large top letter from 20 feet; his acuity was worse than 20/200. Not letting that discourage us, we practiced relaxed ways of seeing and were both amazed with the improvements he made. One month after he stopped using glasses, he read the top four lines of the chart, and began to make out the 5th line (20/50 acuity, one line

away from passing the driver test without glasses). Clearly, I had found a topic worthy of further study; I signed up for a teacher training course.

My vision continued to improve beyond the 'norm' of 20/20 and returned to the level I had had as a teenager; a wonderfully sharp 20/15 to 20/10 distance vision acuity. However, in my forties I began to experience the opposite problem, with near vision becoming blurry after months of intense stress. I knew Dr. Bates had cured his own presbyopic eyesight in his early fifties, so my blurry near vision led to an interesting period of self-study. I delved deeper into the Bates Method and learned to turn that tide around too, which led to writing my own book: *Read Without Glasses at Any Age*.



Relatively few people know about the option to improve eyesight naturally. When your vision deteriorates you typically believe your choices are limited – you either get (stronger) lenses or you become a guinea pig for the currently popular laser surgery industry. My mission is to increase awareness of your natural option and to teach you how to apply it successfully for your sight. I love to watch you take your steps to clarity and aim to help you reach your goals as quickly and easily as possible.

The best and quickest results are achieved by people whose blurry vision has started recently, yet people who have worn glasses for decades have surprised me with equally fast progress. I can't promise that it will take only two weeks to return to clarity, yet you can be sure that the journey is rewarding, worth-while, and far from boring. See www.visionsofjoy.org.

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