

## **NVE Phase II: Vision Games**

Vision Games are ocular motor exercises designed to increase the strength, flexibility, and coordination of the 8 muscles that influence visual function. The cornerstone of the NVE program is that the exercises aren't laborious, or complicated. A series of simple methods have been assembled into pleasant activities that you can perform on your own, or share with the entire family. They are adaptable to any age including babies, children and adults with any type of visual dysfunction.

The first set of Vision Games strengthens stereo vision and depth perception. The prerequisite to fusion is seeing double images, one from each eye. The fusion of the twin images from your eyes takes place in the mind. The two sets of images traveling from your retinas to the visual brain are mentally blended together in each instant of time. It is not completely known exactly how or where fusion occurs in the brain. It is understood that it is a complex and holistic process involving many physical and non-physical factors.

These Fusion games train the eyes and the right and left hemispheres of the brain to work equally at the same time. The quality of your depth perception will increase as Fusion becomes more efficient. Depth perception depends on stereo vision. Heightened depth perception will translate into better eye-hand coordination and improved performance in sports.

### ***Fusion: Basic***

The first Fusion Game that we will learn is called the Gate. It is a naturally occurring optical illusion that exercises the eyes and reveals information about the degree to which they are working together. It is also a concentration game. It tones up the Mind/Eye connection because it requires the proper interaction of the eyes and the mind. You can only see the Gate optical illusion if the eyes and mind are working together correctly. In the beginning you may have anywhere from major to minor differences in the intensity and distinctness of one of the twin images. As you practice the NVE program, you will observe these images balancing out and becoming equally real. When this happens, it means that now you have the proper foundation for true fusion, which is the blending of two equally real and distinct images being fused into a singularity.

## The Basic Gate Exercise

This exercise will train your eyes to work with equal power simultaneously anywhere in your visual field. It provides you with positive feedback from moment to moment about the extent to which both eyes and both sides of the brain are working together. The Gate is an accurate and essential diagnostic tool that is used to identify the weaker eye. You should refer back to this optical illusion to track your progress throughout the NVE program.

Note: You can substitute your index finger or a pen for the Magic Wand.

### Exercise: Getting the Gate

**Sitting or standing comfortably in good light, swing your Nose Paintbrush for a few minutes around the room.** Let yourself warm up with swings making sure that you are blinking, yawning, and breathing, staying relaxed.

**Hold your Magic Wand about six inches in front of your Nose.** Make sure that the Magic Wand is right in the midline of your body at nose level.



**Look right at the Wand.** You should be seeing only one Magic Wand. You can move the Magic Wand anywhere within arms length where it is comfortable for you to see one Magic Wand in front of you.

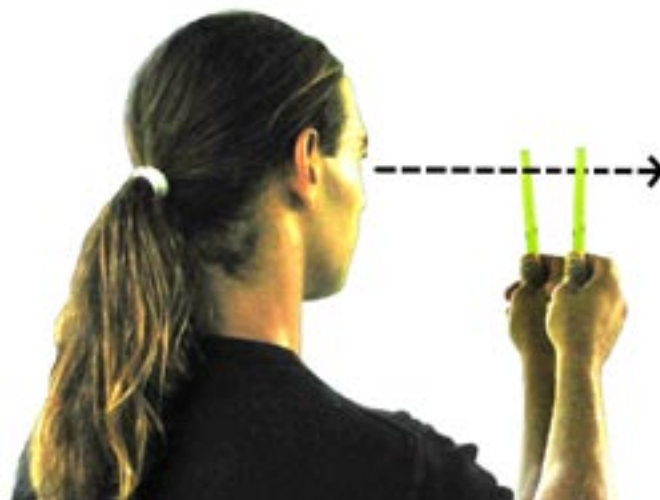
**Let your attention move easily to an object in the distance.** Swing your Nose Paintbrush into the distance and paint something out there.

**If your eyes are working together, and your mind's attention stays focused in the distance, you will notice two ghostly images in front of your nose; this is called the Gate.** Notice the quality of these twin images. If you have one relatively 'solid' Wand and one that

appears 'hazy' or 'ghostly', this is an indication of an imbalance in the energy flow through your visual system.

Do you have a relatively ghostly image, and if so, is it on the right or left? If it is on the right, than it means that the left eye is the weaker eye. If it is on the left, than the right eye is the weaker eye. We will refer back to the information that we get from the Gate when we get to Patching techniques.

The Gate exercise will strengthen the ability of both eyes to work together with equal power. As you get stronger, both sides of the Gate will become more equal. If both sides of the Gate are already equal, this is good because it means you are using both eyes together equally. Playing with the Gate is still beneficial for you because it will build more endurance and flexibility for more challenging levels of Fusion. Fusion skills can be trained to be more efficient by practicing Fusion Games.



*As you gaze into the distance, the wand splits into two images. The more balanced your vision is, the more equal the twin images will be.*

As you work with your Gate, it will become stronger. The goal is to see both images equally and distinctly. When the Gate is equal, it means that you are using both eyes and both sides of your brain equally together.

### **What does it mean if you can't get the Gate?**

If you only see one Magic Wand while your eyes are looking at an object in the distance, then you are only using one eye. The other eye and one side of your brain is not contributing to your vision. This means that you are not fusing.

- You do not have stereoscopic vision.
- You are not able to see very well in 3-D.
- You will have very poor depth perception.
- You are probably not too good at sports.
- Reading takes a lot of energy and your eyes become tired easily.
- Your concentration and comprehension may be less than optimal, and you have a short attention span.

These are just some of the ramifications of not using your eyes equally and thus not possessing the capacity to be able to fuse.

If you do not get the Gate optical illusion, start with the easier Corridor activity at the end of the chapter. As your proficiency increases, go back and try to get the Gate. As long as you can see two images, regardless of how ghostly and insubstantial they might be, it is enough to work with and build on to further develop important fusion skills.

### **The Trombone**

Tromboning describes any activity where the arm is mimicking the movement of playing the trombone. These games are used to manipulate different forms of visual stimulation within arms length. Tromboning activities are great games for anybody that needs reading glasses.

#### **Exercise: Tromboning the Gate**



**Sitting comfortably in good light, hold your magic Wand up about 6 inches in front of the tip of your nose.** Send your mind's attention beyond the Magic Wand into the distance to get the Gate.

**Once you get the Gate, move the Magic Wand from the tip of the nose out to arms length while maintaining the Gate at all**



**times.** Keep your mind in the distance. Look past the Magic Wand to maintain the Gate.

**Then move the Magic Wand in all the way to touch the tip of your nose, maintaining the Gate at all times.**

Keep your mind on something in the distance. Keep looking past the Magic Wand to maintain the Gate.



**Trombone slowly at first, then gradually speed it up.**

Keep sliding your Magic Wand out to arms length and in to the tip of your nose. This is a strenuous exercise, so it can be more challenging to stay relaxed. Keep blinking, yawning, and breathing throughout this exercise so that you do not tense up by staring.

**The easier it gets to maintain the Gate as you are Tromboning it, means that you are getting stronger for Fusion everywhere within arms length.** Your Gate may start to even up as you practice this game. As both eyes are trained to work together, the twin images of the Magic Wand will start to become more equal.

**Practice Tromboning the Gate for a couple of minutes or for about 25 repetitions.** Trombone the Gate as slowly as you need to in order to maintain the Gate for the entire time activity.

If you are able to maintain two equal and distinct images everywhere, then you know that when you are seeing one object, it is the result of true Fusion. This is Fusion based on information that was equally contributed to by both eyes and by both sides of the brain.

## Swinging the Gate

Combining Nose Paintbrush and Swinging the Gate builds more flexibility into your visual system. The fact is that we do not only use our eyes for things directly in front of us. We rely on our eyes to see things all over the visual field. Sketching the environment with the Gate is training our stereo vision to stay on regardless of where we are looking. This will ensure that we are fusing everywhere and have great depth perception no matter where we are looking.

Your clearest and sharpest vision lives inside the frame created by the Gate. That is where you want to place your attention. Allow everything that falls outside of your Gate to be softer. Outside the frame of the Gate is where your peripheral vision resides. It is softer and slightly less distinct than your sharp and distinct vision that is inside the Gate.

### Exercise: Swinging the Gate

**First, get your Gate holding your Magic Wand in front of your nose.** Do this sitting or standing comfortably in good light. Send your mind out to the distance and get the Gate.

**Let your Nose Paintbrush reach through the center of your Gate and paint something that falls in the doorway of your Gate.** Imagine that your Nose Paintbrush extends out through the doorway created by the Gate. The Gate acts like a frame around the object that you are painting.



**Swing your Nose Paintbrush to a different object and edge or paint it through the doorway of the Gate. As you move your Nose paintbrush slowly around in your environment, one thing at a time will fall into the doorway of your Gate.** The object that you are seeing in the doorway of the Gate is the sharpest and clearest thing in your en-



ture visual field. It is the most ideal place for you to do your keenest seeing.

**Swing your Nose Paintbrush with your Gate in a 180 degree arc.** Do a gentle, slow, side-to-side swing with your head, taking the Gate with you. Keep your Magic Wand even with your nose in your midline. Move the Gate around by swinging your Nose Paintbrush with your Magic Wand together as one unit.

**Do your Circle and Lazy-8 Swings with the Gate.** Practice swinging the Gate in all different directions. Keep your Magic Wand in line with the tip of your nose at all times. Notice that something new is being framed by the Gate from moment to moment as you swing the Gate. One thing at a time is the clearest thing in your visual field. Practice with this Gate activity for a couple of minutes or about 25 repetitions. Move slowly and blink, yawn, and breath, staying relaxed.

### **Improving Your Posture with Proper Head Alignment**

We can use the Gate as a tool to determine if the head is in perfect alignment with the rest of the body. This is important, as your head is very heavy. It weighs anywhere from 12-15 pounds. All that weight is perched on top of the relatively slender neck. It is a full time job for the neck to hold up your head! Proper alignment of the head on top of the spine promotes good posture, and helps the neck to go about its business in a relaxed fashion.

When the tips of the Magic Wand or index finger are even with each other, this means that the head is in perfect alignment with the top of the spine. This alleviates much of the tension that may have been present in the neck and causing discomfort and pain. Relaxing the neck muscles eliminates pain and allows energy in the form of circulation of blood, oxygen and nutrients up to the eyes and brain.

## **Exercise: Getting Your Head On Straight**

**Sitting comfortably, bring up your Magic Wand into your midline even with your nose. Send your mind into the distance and get the Gate.** You can hold the Magic Wand anywhere within arms length where it is most comfortable for you to get the Gate.

**Notice if your Gate is uneven across the top.** Even if it is a slight difference in height you want to correct this misalignment.



**Then start moving your head from side-to-side bringing the ear towards your shoulder.**

Move your head slowly, gently loosening up your neck muscles, allowing more energy to circulate into your eyes.

**Move your head slowly so that you can remain**

**aware of the Gate in front of your nose.** You can use the Gate as a form of positive feedback about the position of your head in relation to the rest of your body.

**Keep moving your head until the tops of the Gate are perfectly level with each other.** When the tops of the Gate are even it means that your head is aligned with your spine. If the head is even slightly out of alignment, it creates a great deal of tension and discomfort in your neck muscles. When your head stays in proper alignment with the rest of your spine, your neck muscles will stay loose and relaxed.

**Now close your eyes and internalize what it feels like to have your head on straight!** Try to maintain that feeling all the time no matter what you are doing.

Whether you are sitting at your desk, standing in line, taking a walk, or driving your car, use the Gate to check that your head is on straight.

You can call upon the power of the Gate at any time, during any activity to make sure that your head is on straight! If you are involved in a task and your neck is starting to bother you, your index finger is always available to get the Gate and correct your head alignment in the moment.

This exercise can be performed at a moment's notice. If you're out jogging and your neck starts to feel tight, you can bring up your index finger, get the Gate, and correct your head alignment without breaking stride. Getting your head on straight releases all the stress out of the neck and improves your posture, which can increase your overall energy and endurance.

### **Using the Gate Hat**

This is an innovative way to be able to use the information from the Gate while keeping your hands free. A hat that has been adapted so that a Magic Wand is attached to the brim and hovers in front of your nose right about where you would normally hold it with your hand. This allows you to integrate the information that you receive from the Gate while being able to move about or exercise normally. Wear the Gate Hat while walking, jogging, doing Tai Chi or most any other type of exercise so that you can work with the position of your head alignment as you exercise.



Tension in the neck transmits tension into the eyes. Training yourself to carry the head in the plumb line alleviates the tension in the neck which allows energy to travel up into the eyes. The whole time you are maintaining the Gate you are re-educating yourself to keep your head in proper alignment while at the same time strengthening your eyes to work together with equal power effortlessly.

## **Exercise: Using the Gate Hat**

**Place the Gate Hat on your head so that the Magic Wand is hovering right in front of your nose in your midline.** Make sure the hat is on securely so that it stays in the correct position while you move around.

**Send your mind into the distance and get the Gate.** Send you Nose Paintbrush into the distance and paint the object that falls in the doorway of your Gate.



**Now you can move freely around in your environment with your hands free to do any type of task while staying aware of the Gate being even in height as well as clarity.** Regardless of what you are doing, make the corrections necessary with the position of your head to keep the Gate level at all times. Eventually it will feel natural to hold your head in the correct alignment which will improve your posture and release any tension in the neck muscles.

*The gate is an effective tool for reinforcing proper head alignment and good posture. When your head is on straight, tension in the neck is alleviated and more energy can circulate up to your eyes and brain.*

Wear the Gate Hat while walking, doing aerobics, riding an exercise bike, using a treadmill, or doing Tai Chi. The Gate Hat gives you constant feedback about your head alignment as well as the power to fix it.

Gate activities are versatile and provide a rich source of information about many aspects of your visual abilities and habits. They are all very powerful and effective exercises that can produce profound changes in your visual performance.

## Playing the Sausage Game

This is another game that illustrates the range of your stereo vision vs. your mono vision. It demonstrates the boundaries of where you have the potential for fusion in your visual field. Children love to find the sausage! This game is an easy variation of the Gate Fusion Game. The Sausage Game illustrates the actual size of the fused area in your visual field.

### Exercise: The Sausage Game

**Hold both arms straight out in front of you at the level of your Nose.** Looking right down the end of your nose is always the best place for the eyes to do their seeing.



**Point your index fingers at each other touching their tips together.** Initially look at your index fingers and paint them with your Nose Paintbrush. Be sure to blink, yawn, and breath, staying relaxed.

**Send your mind out into the distance, finding something out there, and paint it with your Nose Paintbrush.**

The key to being able to see the Sausage illusion is to send your mind into and distance and place your mental attention on an object out there.

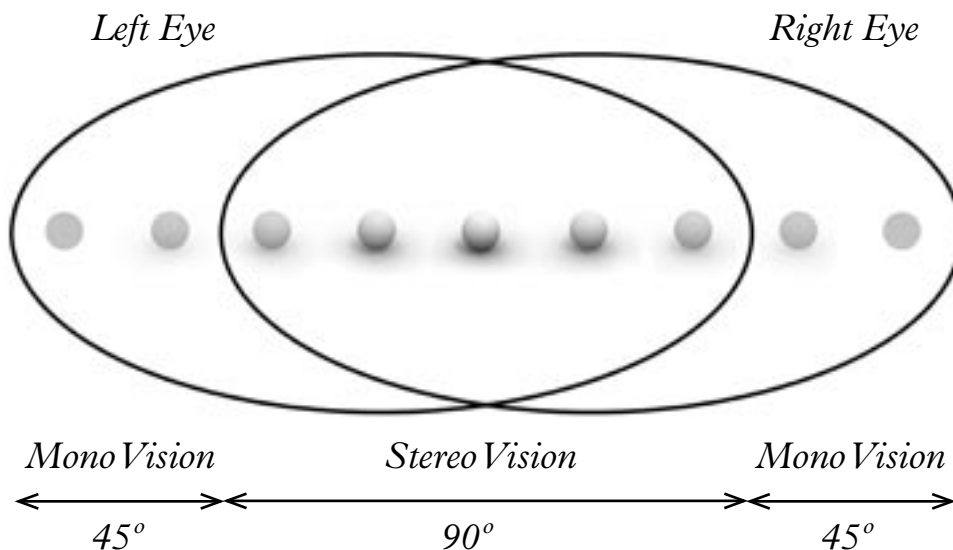


**A sausage-like image appears between your two fingers.** When you see this image of a “sausage”, this means that you are using both eyes together, creating stereo vision. The image should remain steady, balanced, and not waver.

**Hold your head straight ahead as you swing your arms from side-to-side.** Keeping your head stationary in your midline, only let your eyes move in order to follow your hands swinging from side-to-side.

**Let your eyes follow your arms without moving your head.** You can determine the size of the area in your visual field where you use both eyes together, by observing the range that you have for maintaining the sausage image.

You must keep your mind in the distance the entire time to maintain the Sausage optical illusion. If your focus comes back to your fingers, you will lose the Sausage image. Fusion games train you to develop good concentration by teaching you to keep your mind where you put it. The size of the sausage will gradually shrink to nothing at some point in your swing. This is where your fusion ability ceases and only one eye takes over the job of seeing beyond that point. The sausage game puts you in touch with where you have the ability to create stereo vision and excellent depth perception vs. where you use mono vision thus creating poor depth perception in your peripheral visual field.



*The Sausage illusion can only be seen in the part of your visual field where you can Fuse. This is where you have stereo vision and depth perception. You are creating the outer part of your peripheral field using only one eye, and are therefore not Fusing.*



The following movement from the Chinese healing art of Qi Gong reveals the scope of your visual field. It is the area that you take a snapshot of every time you blink. It is a fairly large, circular area that is the manifestation of your retina out in space. If your retina was square, then your visual field would also be a square.

*This Qi Gong movement called 'Upholding Heaven with Both Hands' explores the boundaries of your visual field.*

### Using the Corridor



This exercise exposes the extent and success to which we have developed the correct neurological pathways for Fusion to take place smoothly and efficiently in our brain.

When you hold up the Paddle right to the tip of your nose, you ensure that each side is only seen by one eye. These

separate images travel to opposite sides of the brain to the visual centers where the Corridor illusion is created. Because it is the brain that sees, the right side of the Paddle, which travels into the right eye, is sent to the left visual center and is perceived on the left. The left side of the Paddle travels into the left eye and to the right visual center where it is perceived on the right. Seeing the Corridor correctly reinforces the proper neurological pathways in your brain for fusion.

If you had difficulties getting the Gate, then spend more time practicing with the Corridor. When it is effortless to see the Corridor properly, then go back and try getting the Gate again.



### **Exercise: The Corridor**

**Hold up your Paddle or your Nature Picture with the edge pointing at you touching the tip of your nose.** Make sure that you are in good light. The light should ideally be coming from behind or above you so that it falls equally on both sides of the Paddle or Nature Picture. Blink, yawn and breath, staying relaxed.

**Send your mind out into the distance and notice two ghostly walls appear in front of you that form a hallway or Corridor.** Notice what appears on each of these walls as you gaze down this illusion of a hallway or Corridor.

**Realize that the side that has been viewed by only the right eye was perceived on your left side, and the side that was only viewed by the left eye jumped over to your right side.** If you did not experience this visual phenomenon, then close your eyes and imagine seeing the hallway or Corridor. Yawn and relax. Open your eyes and see if it appears.

**Paint something in the distance that falls inside the Corridor with your Nose Paintbrush.** Imagine that your Nose Paintbrush extends out through the end of your Corridor. Something in the distance falls inside these two walls. As you paint the object in the distance that is framed by this optical illusion, the Corridor will be enhanced.

If one side of the Corridor is more solid and clear than the other side, refer to the Eye Patching chapter later in this section. Use the Patch to

cover the strong eye, letting the weaker eye work on its own for a few minutes. After practicing with the Patching activities, you can check your progress when you return to the Corridor optical illusion. You should start to see each of the sides become more equal.

### **Beginning Fusion Game Sequence: The Corridor**

- You should be sitting comfortably in good light.
- Bring up the paddle or nature picture and hold the edge against the tip of your nose.
- Look into the distance, and get the Corridor optical illusion.
- Make sure that the sides of the paddle or picture cross over to the opposite sides.

### **The Gate**

- Bring up your Magic Wand even with the tip of your nose and look into the distance to get the Gate optical illusion.
- Perform the edging, feather, circle and lazy-8 swings exercises with the Gate.
- Trombone the Gate, maintaining the optical illusion.
- Adjust your head position so that the tops of the Gate are level.
- Blink and breathe. Stay relaxed.

Once you have practiced with the Gate and the Corridor, you have trained your eyes to work more smoothly and efficiently. These games train your ability to use both eyes together and equally within arm's length. This is a crucial step, as much of the strain on our visual system happens at close range. However, what about fusion and stereo vision beyond arm's length into the distance?