

VISION WITHOUT SIGHT: A NEW PHASE OF OPTOMETRIC RESEARCH

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After ten years of preparation I am now launching an exciting new phase of ocular research-vision without sight. According to Blakiston's *New Goul Medical Dictionary*, vision is the act of seeing. The definition of sight is also the act of seeing. *Webster's Dictionary* defines the word "to see" as to perceive by the eye. Therefore, our research would quite literally be the ability of an individual human being to see without using his eyes.

At first, this may appear to be a paradoxical statement until another meaning of vision is examined. Vision can also mean the creation of the imagination.

Imagination is the image forming power of the mind, which loses a great deal of it's potential vivid perception after the individual passes his childhood. This mental phenomenon is so deceptively simple that it is only in recent years that investigators have rediscovered the powers of imagination. The basic principle of imagination was clearly recorded in religious scriptures over ten thousand years ago as follows: "For as he thinkieth in his heart, so is he." (Proverbs 23: 7)

Will power is the controlling component of the human organism in our everyday lives. Imagination controlls us during the state of hypnosis. Hypnosis is, among other things, a state of super concentration, and the individual is in a highly suggestible state of mind where imagination is real.

The significance of this mental phenomenon is readily apparent to anyone with the proper education in the field of psychology. Mental attitudes can be changed to fit the situation with the aid of hypnotherapy.

I have used this method extensively in my practice in obtaining accurate case histories, visual training, and the fitting of contact lenses. Hypnosis is quite important in obtaining an accurate case history. There are many important details that the patient often forgets or cannot explain. This is adequately solved with hypnosis by using the age regression method and determining the exact time and location of headaches or when vision first became blurred. Visual training is a technique where the visual mechanism, including the ocular muscles, is trained to function properly. This method is scientifically sound, but quite often fails because the patient does not have the proper motivation to repeat the monotonous procedure of looking at the targets of any one of several visual training instruments for as long as thirty minutes during one training session. The entire training period may last for several office visits, in addition to training at home, which may continue for several weeks. If the patient is hypnotized and given a post-hypnotic suggestion to the effect that visual training is very beneficial, and interesting, the results are most rewarding. The patient's attitude is strengthened to the point that he understands the importance of visual training, and his motivation increases.

Motivation is a highly important factor in the fitting of contact lenses. When these lenses are inserted for the first time, they irritate the patient's eyes and a large amount of tear fluid is released. In spite of these conditions, the patient must build up his wearing time gradually, and after two or three weeks of discomfort, these annoying symptoms may disappear. But even a high amount of motivation does not always lead to a satisfactory adjustment to contact lenses.

A typical case is Mr. G . . . He had recovered from a cataract extraction from his left eye. The necessary thick glasses needed for correction of visual acuity led to a great deal of visual distortion, peripheral vision, and an extremely unhappy attitude towards life in general. Contact lenses would give the patient almost normal vision, but it was felt that he did not have sufficient motivation. Several sessions using hypnosis and post hypnotic suggestions created a great deal of motivation for wearing contact lenses. During hypnosis, suggestions created within the patient a high degree of imagination. In this highly suggestive state, imagination was real to the patient. He actually saw himself wearing contact lenses. These lenses were easy to wear and made him happy and successful. This imagination state became a reality with post hypnotic suggestions. When the patient became adjusted to his contact lenses he could see clearly. This accomplishment plus post hypnotic suggestions definitely changed his attitudes extensively.

Attitudes, emotions, and experience, are components of mental perception, which is constantly modifying observed physical objects. Quite literally, we see with our minds. A typical case is that of two observers watching a woman approach from

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the distance. As she comes closer one observer sees her as just another ordinary woman. However, the other observer sees beauty and love reflected in the approaching woman's face, because she is-mother. Both observers saw the same woman, but her appearance was changed according to mental interpretation. Magicians use illusions and other psychological phenomenon in order to achieve their final results. The hand is not quicker than the eye, not was it ever intended to be. The magician's power of deception merely leads the observer to interpret physical events according to suggestion, and imagination.

A glorious future is locked within the research of vision without sight. Vision specialists owe civilization all of our zeal and knowledge to explore this new avenue of science most thoroughly.

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