

Here are several conversations, stories and hints about using Bates for myopia improvement (from a Bates blog).

I have practiced vision therapy for 26 years. I know many of the tricks. I have experienced a wide range of all the setbacks. I know all the symptoms. I have tried to figure out this vision improvement thing for years. The best results I have ever gotten, when applying everything I know, is to try not to be so obsessed about all the little details, and instead experience vision this way: just see from my visual cortex, not my eyes, use panoramic vision at the same time I use focused vision, diverge my eyes far through things to experience the 3-D vision we have and relax the focus, look at the world as I would a picture, moving interestingly around to what seems pertinent at the time. Breathe, relax, be curious but not anxious. Think love, forgiveness, compassion, for yourself, and others. Subconsciously I know the Bates Method, to keep my eyes moving, blink, edge, seeing one point better, the swing, etc. But the first group of suggestions that I mentioned gets me to and keeps me in a place of being instead of doing. Vision cannot be an end-gaining activity or it doesn't work (for most of us who are challenged). It is in the moment of the process that allows you to exist in the moment and be one with it, visually and in other ways. I truly believe this is the way we have to perceive and not perceive ourselves in order to be leaving ourselves alone to let our bodies and eyes do what they are supposed to do. If anyone is interested, Peter Grunwald is having a week-long workshop on June 24th in Plainfield, MA Earthdance Retreat Center. He is amazing. That is the trick. NEVER REACH for the flashes. Let it happen and be aware of your spirit, not your eyes.

I've recently discovered -- or so I think- that in my myopic staring, especially at the distance, I am actually constantly looking for centers and trying to hold on to them, i.e., groping my way back toward the centralization of clear vision but so sluggishly that the attempt is doomed to fail. Then I realized that the point of sketching was not to circumscribe things, but rather to avoid creating centers, to keep shifting away. I now sometimes -- at close range and far-- pick a surface, e.g, head of pencil, on which it is tempting to center-stare and deliberately avoid doing that by sketching around the object without letting my eyes fall on it. Thus, I may hold up a finger tip and then cross it with the other finger. I will then move my eye in a pattern that includes the crossing finger, but not the fingertip. Lately, I've just been looking at things and telling myself that I don't care--this actually helps break the habit of trying to *make* my focus better and improves my acuity a little. "Yes I have reduced my prescription 3 times since starting NVI. My first reduction was from -5.75 to -5.25 then to -4.75 then to -4.0. I do not know what my real prescription is at the moment, although there probably is no real prescription for me because my vision fluctuates so much from moment to moment. For driving at night I wear my -4.0 lenses, whereas in the daytime in bright light my vision is usually almost perfect so I drive without any lenses whatsoever. I keep my glasses in my lap in case my vision blurs but lately I have not had to reach for them at all." ---This is even more encouraging. It gives me hope that my improving flashes will eventually translate into a measurable improvement in my usual prescription. But I am starting from

more than -10.00 D. Still any improvement is better than the continuing degradation that has been the story of my vision over the years

You say you often get nervous. Are you clear what you are experiencing when you get nervous? Do you experience a feeling of anxiety but are not completely sure where this feeling comes from or are you clear what you are nervous or anxious about? If you are into the emotional aspects of poor vision then we might be able to say something about your left eye which you are currently not seeing with. Do you see you are fitting into a pattern of sorts? You are nervous and its your feeling eye or emotional eye that is not seeing! You are aware you are nervous but do you see what you are nervous of? I think it would be helpful to start cultivating the expectation or belief that you can see with your left eye but for the moment success is delayed. So allow yourself to imagine you will see with this eye rather than persist with the negative 'cant see'. The eye appears to be aware of something as it moves with the other eye? and responds to light with the iris? So perhaps already you might see that its not blind, its just that you dont see what the eye sees? So rather than being a monocular person you are just a normal person who is on some kind of a journey towards better health? Good luck! I am not a -8D myope but I am a -6D (or was) who can flash perfect vision. When the flashes first began they would only last a few seconds but now they last for minutes at a time. It is certainly not blur interpretation. It is absolute perfect clarity that is even clearer than if I were wearing corrective lenses. ---Jason, It is very encouraging for me to read this as my flashes are also improving with time. Could you tell me if your "corrected" vision is also improving? Have you been able to reduce the full (or almost full) prescription you wear for driving?

These flashes last through many blinks. Also, I can feel something happening inside my eye. I am not sure if it is the ciliary or as Dr. Bates would say the extraocular muscles releasing their tension. I really don't care, although I personally believe it is the extraocular muscles. It is certainly a letting go of tension that is for sure. It sort of feels like my sinuses letting go of some pressure. As far as what I do to obtain these flashes, I try to practice all the methods that Dr. Bates taught (Palming, Swinging, Sunning, etc...). The clear vision just comes and goes as I go about my day. Nothing in particular brings on sudden clarity, it usually just comes on its own when I am very relaxed. I would say the most important thing that I do would be to not wear any corrective lenses for as much of every day as possible. Just getting outside without lenses and viewing God's creation and all it's beauty as I have never even looked at it before, brings incredible clarity unlike anything that I have ever seen with or without corrective lenses. I just get away from the fast paced world and relax completely without a care of what else is going on at that time. I just try to be in that moment at that time and just enjoy what my eyes are showing me. My eyes will move around all by themselves to what interests them and I am just along for the ride. The moment that I "try" to see something or "try" to hold on to the clear vision my vision immediately blurs. I believe that this is my biggest roadblock to perfect vision, just letting my eyes do the seeing without my help. I also would like to add that I

try to practice "Open Focus" as Jacob Liberman explains in his book. I believe this goes hand in hand with what Bates taught, he just did not explain it well enough for me to understand it until I read Liberman's book. I hope that this could be of some help to you.

The constant drifting away from clear focus is also one of my frustrations, although I am making progress in prolonging the time of clarity and also increasing my ability to recover clarity when blur starts to set in. What I have discovered in my case, is that the blur is ALWAYS preceded by muscular and skeletal tension in my back, my shoulder blades and shoulders, my neck, my ears, my jaw, my brows and/or my cheeks either singly or in various combinations or in extreme cases all together. Occasionally I also experience what I can only describe as a low level sense of physical "panic" which manifests itself in tensing muscles all over my body. This feeling does not seem to be related to any outside stimulus of which I am aware. I am doing the following to counteract the tendency to blur: 1. Daily stretching EXERCISES of my upper body including thighs, waist, lower back, shoulders and arms, neck and facial muscles. In my case they are clearly out of balance and tensing inappropriately much of the time, so I am trying to increase flexibility and muscle tone to fight the almost spasmic tendency they seem to have developed. I use rudimentary Tai chi for the stretching and balance as well as touching toes, cross crawls, swings and shoulder lifts, all of which, I have found, address the specific tight muscle groups that seem to be resulting in my eyeballs being squeezed. After a few minutes I can feel the sockets releasing and my eyes feel wonderfully free and blur lessens. 2. I pay attention to posture (the Alexander Technique) I try to overcome the many bad postural habits I have developed over the years, a constant checking of where the tension is building up and what adjustments of the body and mind release them. 3. I notice that I have the tendency to stop breathing, if my stomach isn't going in and out my diaphragm is frozen and I'm not breathing deeply enough, ergo; muscles all over are not getting enough oxygen and cramping sets in. 4. I inhibit squinting in all its forms. In all my years of wearing glasses I must have invented 360 ways to clamp my eyes, every counteractive movement of my face seems to end up becoming a new squint. It is the most persistent subconscious habit of poor vision I have. I want to padlock clarity and thereby squeeze it to death. 5. I blink and shift and try to rest my eyes on the things I want to see and let them find their own way to focus. sometimes they flash totally clear with 20/20 or better acuity, but most of the time clear vision is simply relatively adequate, but encouragingly better and better each day, with the periods of extreme blur gradually disappearing so that even my blurry state now allows me to function in all my pursuits. I use the Snellen chart every day at 12 feet, I try to sun every day, and I make myself read relatively small type text for at least a hundred pages each day, holding the book or article as far from my eyes as is possible. For me forcing myself to continue to read even when tension sets in (I try to release the tension, rather than squinting) has led to a much faster progress. I am far sighted so near work is the most difficult, perhaps the opposite is appropriate for myopes. Thanks for sharing your experience, I always have to check myself when I get frustrated, because I really have made great progress using Bates' principles. Keep it up.

When I look at something, either to read or an object in 3D, it shifts in and out of focus constantly. One minute it's really clear and the next minute it's not clear at all. Depending on how far away it is, it may be clear more often than not, or vice versa. i.e. when reading it is usually clear more often than not since I am not that far away from it. This is not something that has always happened. I don't know when it started happening and never paid much attention to it until now. It seems almost like I *am* capable of seeing clearly but am unable to hold this image. Often when I look at the eye chart there are times when it becomes completely clear and I can see 20/20 and other times when it is so blurry that I can't even see where the 20/20 line is. I so wish I could just hold on to that focus! I don't know if this is the same as a clear flash. If it is, it's a clear flash that is constantly coming and going all of the time, not just happening for a second once in a while.