

Brain Bites - Attending VS Defending – March 2009

Category – Attending Skills

The ability to “attend” is a vital skill for people of all ages. Attending has been described as, ***giving all of your physical attention to another person or task.***

According to William James, famous American Philosopher and Psychologist, each of us literally chooses, by our way of attending to things, what sort of universe we shall appear to inhabit.

In other words, ***we determine if the world we live in is safe and rewarding, or fearful and punishing, depending on how we have learned to "attend" to things.***

Attending directly affects all areas of our life experience. A specific example would be the communication that occurs between people. A big picture example is how we perceive the world around us.

Clearly, “attending” is an essential skill to develop if we want to navigate a productive, meaningful and enjoyable life!

When using our attending skills in communication, we have the opportunity to transmit via our actions and body language "I am interested in what you have to say". However, a lack of attending inadvertently communicates that "I really don't care about what you have to say", and therefore, I may not really care about you.

Obviously, this impacts the quality of our relationships and the outcome of our exchanges. With a lack of proper attending, neither party senses safety. Rather than feeling like worthy and capable contributors, both parties end up feeling defensive, lost and overwhelmed.

When we are in stress (flight or fight), the brain stem (which is the life saving part of our brain) takes over to ensure our safety and we are unable to effectively attend to anything beyond our immediate survival. ***Brain function requires efficient connections across both sides of the brain; these are called neural pathways, something the Brain Gym movements connect naturally. When we are in the Brain stem, we are in stress, this inhibits these connections. Our personal resources become limited and we perceive the world accordingly.***

Brain Gym movements integrate the brain allowing information to flow easily from the senses into memory and then out again as new learning.

When you are experiencing difficulty completing a project, developing a new skill, productivity output, group cohesion, managing change, clarity, decision making or your general overall life experience, you are likely having problems with your attending skills. If left “unattended”, this stress based disconnect will continue to create a negative chain reaction that affects our attitude, perception and functioning throughout the duration of the day.

Brain Gym removes stress and build healthy, balanced, and integrated neurological networks that move us from surviving to thriving. The movements re-educate the mind/body system for accomplishing any skill, function or goal with greater ease and efficiency.

The Brain Gym integrated movements quite literally, allow us to see and experience others and the world the world from an abundantly new place.

Jill Hewlett and Sharon Todd are both Educational Kinesiologists and Licensed Brain Gym Trainers. Their company, Brain Works Global Inc., trains clients on how to maximize their learning potential while working in conjunction with their individual goals.

They provide keynotes, in house training, and sponsored events to a wide range of organizations and the community. For more information go to www.brainworksglobal.com or call 905.830.6902.