OPTIONS CENTER
EDUCATION TOPIC

WHOLE BODY MOVEMENT ACTION BALANCE

ALSO KNOWN AS

DENNISON LATERALITY REPATTERNING:
What is it and what does it do?

When beginning to learn something new (whether academics, new skills, or exercises) the student may feel spacey, without a frame of reference, or as if s/he is "trying" too hard to learn. If this is the case, the student is probably only working with one hemisphere of his/her brain at a time. Usually the hemisphere s/he is working with is the left hemisphere, or the logical, language processing side of the brain. By using only one side of the brain, the student will not be able to learn effectively or easily. This can lead to the student feeling frustrated, blocked, angry, nervous, or depressed. However, if the brain's right and left hemispheres are integrated, the student will feel less stressed, calmer, be able to concentrate better, and therefore learn and retain new information more easily.

Dr. Paul Dennison, creator of Edu-K [Brain Gym®], developed a series of exercises called Dennison Laterality Repatterning which helps the nerve connections between the right and left hemispheres of the brain to become stronger and corrects "wrong" connections. In his words he says, "The intention of repatterning is to change **trying** to **automatic** movement and **reflex** movement to **conscious** choice." This means that the repatterning decreases the concentration of connections going to only one hemisphere (the left hemisphere or "trying" side of the brain) and increases the connections between the right and left hemispheres so that the hemispheres are integrated, to facilitate learning.

There are three steps in the Whole Body Movement Action Balance/Dennison Laterality Repatterning [*Brain Gym® Handbook*, p. 18-21]: 1) Cross Crawl, Hum, Look up to Left; 2) Homolateral Crawl, Count ***Out Loud***, Look down to Right; 3) Integration Metaphor-Join left and right hands together. The exercises include visual, auditory, and kinesthetic modes of learning. Including all three modes of learning into each step facilitates integration between the body and brain, making learning new information easier.

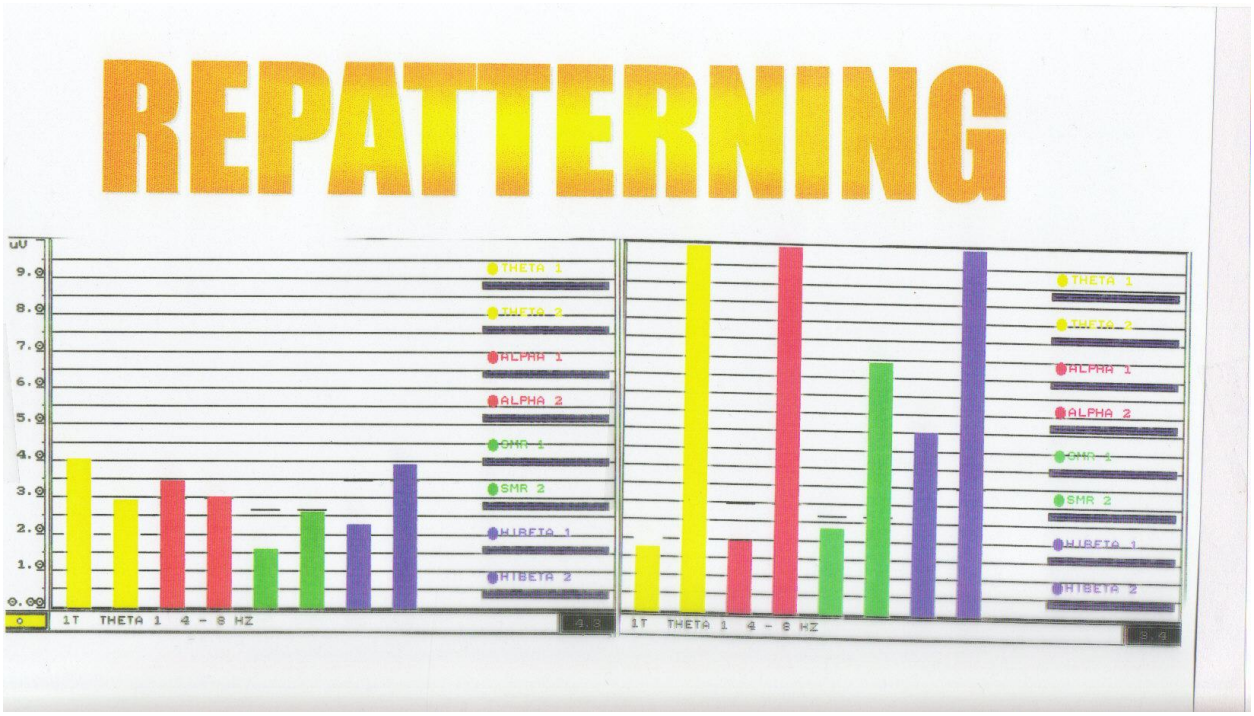
Cross Crawls [*Brain Gym® Teacher's Edition Revised*, p. 4] are done when the student touches a hand to the opposite knee (right hand to left knee, left hand to right knee), which because it crosses the midline of the body, also crosses the midline of the brain (connects both hemispheres). By humming, the student allows vocalizing and auditory processing to occur. Looking up to the left "turns on" the right hemisphere of the brain, which is the reflex or automatic side of the brain. This series of exercises should be automatic; if the student has to "try" or this exercise is hard, then the student's hemispheres are imbalanced.

Homolateral crawls (also called "puppet" crawls) are done by the student raising the same arm and leg at the same time (right arm and right leg, left arm and left leg). Counting aloud helps include vocalizations and auditory processing. Crawling homolaterally, counting aloud, and looking down to the right "turns on" the left hemisphere, or the trying side of the brain. This series of exercises should cause the student to pause and think about what s/he is doing; if the student finds these exercises easy, then the student's hemispheres are imbalanced.

Using the Integration Metaphor as the last exercise allows the student to visualize both hemispheres of the brain integrating when s/he brings the fingertips of the left and right hands together. Joining both hands in this way helps the student focus and concentrate better in the present moment.

After performing the Dennison Laterality Repatterning the student will feel as if s/he has a frame of reference and is ready to learn. Crossing the midline (cross crawling) will be automatic and easy. Because the student's brain is now integrated, the student will be focused, calm, and find learning new information easier.

There is a woman in Canada by the name of Sue Maes who has a machine that with EEG and a computer is able to monitor the changes in the brain wave as her students/clients do Brain Gym®. For more information on her machine, look at Education Topic, Part 1- Water.



PERSON A **PERSON B**

Person A: According to Sue: Often Repatterning balances the hemispheres evenly. Notice too that it produced a lot of focus [Beta which is green and purple]. This person repatterns daily. Repatterning is wonderful for ADD/ADHD students. They need to be repatterned daily.

Person B: This person is doing the repatterning in their left hemisphere [the higher bars] and not as much in the right [the lower bars].

BIBLIOGRAPHY:

Dennison, Paul and Dennison, Gail. *Brain Gym® Teacher's Edition Revised*. Ventura, CA: Edu-Kinesthetics, Inc. 1994.

Dennison, Paul, Ph.D. and Dennison, Gail, *Brain Gym® Handbook, Second Edition.* Ventura, CA: Edu-Kinesthetics, Inc., 1997. Pages 18-21.

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