Eye Movement and Blinking – New Evidence Suggests Links to Thought and Emotion

According to an article in the August 2007 issue of Scientific American, micromovements of the human eye give us the capacity for vision – and a window to the mind.

As you read this, your eyes are rapidly flicking from left to right in small hops, a much slower sequence than when you’re focusing. When you stare at a person’s face, your eyes will similarly dart here and there, resting momentarily on one eye, then the other, on the nose, mouth and other features. With a little practice, you can quickly and frequently flood your view of your eyes as you scan a page, how or some.

But these voluntary, self-initiated eye movements, called saccades, turn out to be just a small part of our daily workout. A lot of eye movement is unconscious and automatic, serving an important role in the brain's basics associated with emotions and memory. In particular the Lateral Geniculate Nucleus (LGN), a structure connected to the emotional limbic system.

When you see something, more impulses are collected at the eye must first pass through the LGN on its way to the brain. Then they are processed into the cortex or other brain areas - and an image appears to your awareness. If you have an emotional attachment of some kind associated with what you see, then even less cognitive effort is required - your LGN will process the information, which then adds "emotional" data to the data stream, and you may see something else.

If you could focus your eyes in such a way to stop the micromovements of your eye, you’d stop seeing. The unconsciousness for processing the right data in light would simply adapt to the overall picture and you’d see nothing. Micromovements allow you to see something else, something otherwise you wouldn’t even be aware of because your eyes are in constant motion instead of the same image being in motion.

Although not eye movement, blinking is also a necessary process for keeping things in view. Every time you blink, minute smudges in your eye must re-adapt to the changes in light level in each blink. Rapid blinking causes a flurry of muscular movements as your eyes seek to adapt a little like a starter response. In addition to assisting with eye movement, blinking helps to clear any target film from the eye and helps to cool the eye. This is an evolutionary adaptation that protects us from predatory animal-like eyes that would roll a bit higher or lower - blinking creates a sort of "speed lock" that might turn up something we may have missed in the second after the image was falling on the eye. A slow blink might allow us to see what our eyes have grown accustomed to just seconds before. This could account for why our fear responses is so closely associated with our blinking and eye movement patterns.

Nowadays, we use blinking to sustain and clean the eye lens. But just as muscles, blinking is necessary to maintain and through complex blinking patterns can indicate our trains of thought. The most notable study of muscle blinking and thought processes was in Nison's infusion of the "no-crouch" speech, in which blinking was increased normal during certain segments, indicating to some that the body was lying.

I don't know if that is true or not – but it is interesting to me that Nison's eyelid blinking pattern changed when he felt he was being watched.

When you feel stressed your blinking pattern may change as well. Conversely, by association, rapidly blinking can trigger a stress response in some people. My belief is that this blinks blinking association can be managed - you can take charge of your physical manifestation in order to create a new response rather than the typical stress-blind-feel responses. And I think you’d be surprised just how fast you can develop this new skill.

Just as your eye movement can adapt within seconds to the environment and thus face the awareness of what is being looked at, too, your stress blinking pattern can adapt to a new environment of release rather than initiating a bar response. This can also be conscious your blinking eye movement can be enhanced in the LGN, you have access to your stress response system at its deepest level.

The only available blinking release therapy I know of currently is Rapid Eye Technology (RET), which has been around since the mid 1980s but it has not been common for people other than those with other stress disorders including anxiety, phobias, trauma, and others. The technique is non-invasive, extremely low stress, and fast. Many people experiencing RET remarks that it helps to be effective, but this experiential comment is gone and don’t have to admit it worked for them.

Camilla Browning, an EFT therapist from Cadek, Alabama, recently wrote me, "Eye therapy is a wave retailer. I have 60 minutes of EFT on a bad memory due to his war experiences. He told me later that the issue was totally clear and that he was able to come off of g this medications after that."