

Drawing on the right side of the brain

Make a small switch in your thinking and you can release your artistic abilities instantly.

John Lawlor discusses what's involved, with reference to the work of Professor **Betty Edwards**.

The Creative Right Side

In contrast, the right side of the brain works in a visual, non-verbal way, perceiving and rapidly processing constantly changing, simultaneous, visual information using feelings, intuition and hunches. This is the creative part of the brain, the part that enables a juggler to juggle or allows us to drive our car - all without our having to think about it.

In her book, "Drawing on the Right Side of the Brain", Ms. Edwards describes how she perfected a system that will enable anyone at all to acquire a real skill in drawing.

She discovered that if she could get her students to use the right or creative side of the brain to draw, even her most unpromising pupils made astounding progress in a short space of time.

To do this, she had to trick the left side of the brain into stepping aside, and she managed it by getting her pupils to draw from a picture that they looked at upside down. The left side of the brain in the process was unable to do what it normally does, that is, to put a name or an identity on the picture, because all it was able to do was comprehend a mixture of unfamiliar lines, shapes and spaces. Unable to function under these conditions, the left side then retreated into the background and allowed the right side to come into play.

ASTOUNDING progress was made by her pupils using this "upside down" technique,

and in her book there are remarkable examples of before and after drawings, achieved within a period of just a few months by students who in the beginning were "talentless".

Increased Awareness

The more "upside down" drawings they did, the more that shift into the creative part was reinforced in them. Not only did their skill in drawing continue to increase, but they also found that they began to "see differently" and "think differently". In other words, their minds began to open up more, their awareness increased and they began to work more from the creative part of their mind.

This system of "upside-down" drawing, it appears, acts like a switch which allows us to enter into the unlimited part of the mind which is forever creative, versatile, intelligent and expansive in its movement. The key to learning how to draw, therefore, is to set up conditions that cause you to make a mental shift to a different mode of information processing. In this drawing mode you will be able to draw what you see even though you may never have studied drawing. By learning to draw, you will learn to see differently. Creative solutions to problems, whether personal or professional will become accessible to you.

But creative drawing is only a key to open the door to other areas. Using the right side of the brain will help you expand your powers as an individual through increased awareness of your own mind



Test Your Skill

Have a go at this "upside-down" drawing yourself (above), which is a reproduction of a line drawing by Picasso. The image is upside down, so you will be copying the upside-down image. In other words, you will copy the Picasso drawing JUST AS YOU SEE IT.

and its workings. The potential force of the creative, imaginative side of your brain is almost limitless.

Look at the upside-down drawing above for a minute. Observe the angles and shapes and lines. When you start your drawing, begin at the top and copy each line, moving from one line to another. Just see it in terms of lines, curves, shapes and angles in relation to each other. Try not to think about what the forms are and avoid

any attempt to recognise or name the various parts.

By the time you are well into the drawing, your left mode will have turned off and your right will have turned on. Don't turn the drawing the right way up until you are completely finished. When you do, I am sure you will be surprised to find a big improvement in your drawing ability.

"Drawing on the Right Side of the Brain" by Betty Edwards. [Fontana/Collins]

RAQUEL WELCH ON YOGA

In her bestselling book, "Total Beauty & Fitness Program" Raquel Welch says:

"Based on my personal experience and observations, I can't help but be especially enthusiastic about the possibilities Yoga offers to people of all physical conditions. It's a common denominator that cuts through the boundaries of the physical culturists, and into the mainstream of everyday man. I'm not saying that it's the answer to every problem in the world, but, from what I've



witnessed, it sure puts a dent in some rather common complaints like arthritis, bad backs, stiff necks, tension headaches, and high blood pressure - to name but a few.

I've seen a lot of women and men with health problems improve themselves through Yoga - people with steel pins in their joints, plates in their knees, legs twisted and malformed from injury. I've seen young girls who were so emaciated that their knees stuck out bigger than their thighs and their shoulders collapsed over their sunken chests - and in a year of practice they managed to transform themselves into beauties with shapely legs, filled-out flesh, and pretty faces, with shining hair and the glow of health. They do their yoga every day. It's a small price to pay. "

A Style of My Own

Yoga is the perfect complement to the stresses of a modern lifestyle. **Deirdre Ahern** (right) TV Production Assistant tells how she makes it an integral part of her life.

I suppose you could say that my work in television production is demanding and stressful. The workload can be heavy, the hours long. There are schedules and deadlines to be met, so many things to think about. Yes, it's busy. I realise now that stress is a reality in everyday life but it's how you cope with it personally that counts. And how you cope can all but eliminate it without too much bother. One's lifestyle is the key.

I've proved it in my own life. Learning how to focus is all-important. Applying my mind in a positive way to all that I do helps enormously. My focus is simply the job in hand. It's wonderful the way things come about effortlessly as a result of doing that. It's

not hard work anymore. It's like being in the flow of life and so many good things happen as a result of that. In other words if, say, I have a schedule to prepare, being really focused makes me aware of all the elements that have to be considered - it makes the job of scheduling so much easier, because one has the whole picture almost unconsciously. It happens in the right way and you simply end by bypassing all the pitfalls before they've actually occurred. It leaves one thinking there are no problems, only solutions. Thus the job becomes easier and one accomplishes more in less time. So stress is reduced straight away and decision-making becomes effortless.

Time Out

Taking time out is very important, especially in the work that I do. I live in the practice of Yoga. It brings an extra dimension to the quality of my 'time-out'. As a result relaxation has become a way of life for me. It spills into every aspect of my life, my work, my relationships, every moment of the day. Yoga has given me a wonderful all-round holistic approach to living. Something as simple and easy to do as the Yoga breath can make such a vital difference to my day. It helps me focus. Taking five minutes out during the day, every so often, just to be quiet helps my body and mind relax and come together again.

Positive Living

I'm fired by the idea of health - keeping fit, taking exercise, eating the right food. Mental health - how we think - has more effect on our state of overall health than anything. Living in a positive frame of mind can affect everything in the right way.

I listen to Tony Quinn's Educo tapes every day. They are continuously educating me and my life gets simpler and better all the time. Living the whole Educo philosophy has made the vital difference in my life. It's shown me how to tap into the vast reservoir of my own potential and power as a human being. And the result of this? Well, my life has totally changed - I'm much more relaxed, much healthier, much more alive than I've ever been. I feel I have so much more to give as a human being because of my own state and that makes me feel good because we can really touch each other, in the right way, when we're truly healthy, positive and full of life. Like someone once said to me 'If you say 'yes' to life it will certainly say 'yes' to you'.

