

Centering is the ability to cross the midline between the upper and lower body and the corresponding upper and lower brain functions: the midbrain (emotional content) and cerebrum (abstract thought). Nothing can be truly learned without feeling and a sense of meaningfulness. The inability to stay centered results in irrational fear, fight-or-flight responses, or an inability to feel or express emotions. Those movements which relax the system and prepare the student to take in and process information without negative emotional overlay are identified by the centering or grounding designation under the ACTIVATE(S) THE BRAIN FOR category.

Once the student learns to move his or her eyes, hands, and body in concert, the Brain Gym activities have served their purpose, and integration becomes an automatic choice. Some individuals will find Brain Gym helpful over a short period of time to establish a desired behavior. Most students consciously choose to continue the movements for a matter of weeks or months, to help reinforce the new learning. Many learners will return to their favorite Brain Gym movement routine when new stresses or challenges appear in their lives.

Brain Gym is based upon three simple premises:

1. Learning is a natural, joyous activity that continues throughout life.
2. Learning blocks are the inability to move through the stress and uncertainty of a new task.
3. We are all "learning-blocked" to the extent that we have learned not to move.

Many of us have come to accept limitations in our lives as inevitable, and may fail to find the benefits that positive stress can bring. The Brain Gym movements are a natural, healthful alternative to tension that we can use and teach others to use when challenges present themselves.

The educator, in particular, must be an expert at identifying behaviors that indicate that the student is having difficulty moving information through to integration. With Brain Gym, most learning blocks can be released if they are recognized and addressed in a supportive manner.

The healthy child knows when he or she is stuck, and asks for help by means of his or her behavior. There are no lazy, withdrawn, aggressive, or angry children, only children denied the ability to learn in a way that is natural to them.

Given the opportunity to move in his own way, the child is capable of completing the learning cycle. With support, and with permission to move in the classroom in a positive manner, he will unfold into his unique and complete intelligence in a way that is natural and easy. He will not be blocked; he will be free to learn.

