

Thumb Rotation

The only thing you need for this activity is you. To help you with attention and concentration you have to follow your thumb with only your eyes.

Step 1. 'Eyes only' for your thumb

Stand with equal weight on each foot and hold one arm out in front of you, so your elbow is bent and one of your hands makes a fist shape with the thumb pointing up. You should be able to see your thumb nail and it should be directly in front of your eyes.

Side to side

Start with your thumb directly in front of your eyes. Begin to move your arm slowly in a straight line to the left. Stop when your thumb is level with your left shoulder. Now begin to move your thumb slowly to the right until it is level with your right shoulder, then start to move it back to the left again. Keep looking at your thumb nail as you move your arm slowly from side to side. Try to keep your eyes on your thumb nail all the time.

Notes for helpers:

Even though this activity seems simple, many people have difficulty following their own thumb as they move their arm. Often their head, and sometimes their tongue as well, will follow the thumb, as well as eyes. They may also hold their breath. Some will move their whole body from the ankles up. Some even lose their balance.

If there is movement of the body, head or tongue, try to make them aware of this undesired extra movement by asking questions. As with all activities in this program, it is very important that the person doing the activity is allowed to self discover. If they are told what they are doing, they are not thinking for themselves. Ask questions like 'when you follow your thumb, does anything else move as well as your eyes?' Sometimes your questions may need to be more direct, like 'what does your tongue do when you follow your thumb?' Once they have become aware of the extra movement ask them to try moving only eyes to follow their thumb

Circles

Now move your arm in a slow circle, but don't make it too big - there is no need to stretch your arm too much. Follow your thumb with just your eyes as you move your arm. Again, try not to move your head.

There are 3 ways you can make a circle:

1. Your thumb goes in a circle directly in front of you so that the thumb stays the same distance from your face.
2. Your thumb goes in a circle so that it starts going up and away from you then as it makes the circle it begins to come down and towards you.
3. Your thumb makes a circle so it stays at the same height but begins going to the left and way from you then as it makes the circle it is to your right and moving towards you.

Figure eights

This time move your arm in a figure eight pattern, not stretching your arm too far. Follow your thumb with only your eyes.

